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East Asia

Southeast Asia

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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA

Ream Navy Base Described, Thai Prisoners Noted
42060039 Vientiane PASASON in Lao 4 Jul 88 p 3

[Article by Manithip: "Growth and Strength of the Cambodian Navy"]

[Excerpts] Although the Cambodian Navy is young, it admirably performs its duty in protecting the nation's waters from infiltration and provocation by enemies. As a result the naval officers and men received distinguished medals from the State Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea. The Ream naval base, the largest naval base of the Cambodian Navy, is southeast of the Kompong Som port district along the coast of Cambodia. After the nation had been liberated from the

genocidal regime, the Ream naval base was reestablished with help from the Vietnamese Volunteer Forces. It has now become an important strategic location for defending Cambodia. With assistance from fraternal countries in training and national defense, they arrested over 20 Thai persons who had been fishing illegally in Cambodian waters. The troops in Ream camp are responsible for a vast area of 180 square km along the seashore. Early this year they arrested 56 of Pol Pot's soldiers and killed many of them who had infiltrated. As a result, the enemy did not dare to invade the military base and the nearby area. In addition to national defense, the standard of living for these soldiers has also been raised. Many new houses have been built. They also raise chickens, pigs and cattle.

9884

Generals Get USSR Decorations

42060035b Vientiane KONGTHAP PASASON LAO
in Lao 26 May 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Defense Ministry Holds a Ceremony for the Presentation of the Soviet Army's 70th Anniversary Medals"]

[Text] In the evening of 10 May our Defense Ministry held a ceremony for the presentation of the Soviet Army's 70th anniversary medals to high-ranking Lao officers. Approval was given by the Defense Ministry of the USSR for the Soviet Embassy in the LPDR to make the presentations.

Those honored to receive these medals included Maj Gen Choummali Saignason, an alternate member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee and first deputy minister of defense, Maj Gen Osakan Thammatheva, Major General Aisouli-gnasaeng, Lt Gen Somsak Saisongkham, Brig Gen Thonglai Kommasit, Brigadier General Bounthon, Brigadier General Somlak, Brigadier General Savai, Brig Gen Bounian Kham-ouan, and 37 other high-ranking officers affiliated with the Defense Ministry. After the presentation ceremony Maj Gen Osakan Thammatheva, a member of the Party Central Committee as well as a deputy minister of defense and head of the political department of the army, represented the high-ranking officers of the Lao People's Army in expressing their appreciation to the Soviet Army and the Soviet Embassy. He spoke of the close solidarity between the Lao and Soviet armies, which demonstrated the confidence of the Soviet Army in the Lao People's Army and was an honor for the Lao People's Army.

08149

'Talk' Sees Worsening Relations With Thailand If Sitthi Foreign Minister

42060040d Vientiane PASASON in Lao 23 Jun 88 p 2

[“Talk” Column]

[Excerpts] Mr Sitthi not only is blocking and dragging out negotiations on relations between the Lao and Thai Governments to solve political problems, but is also using all kinds of schemes hoping to destroy various agreements, including those for a cease-fire and the separation of Lao and Thai troops. For example, he has been exploiting the Thai media to create scandals, following the visit to Laos of Khunying Phankheua Yongchaiyut, the wife of Gen Chaowaalit Yongchaiyut, Army commander in chief and acting Thai military supreme commander. He is hoping to create misunderstandings between the military leaders of the two countries, but his schemes have failed, so he is continuing to try to block implementation of the agreements signed by both countries. For example, he also recently blocked the ongoing cultural exchange program between Laos and Thailand

by ordering the cancellation of the visit by the Lao gymnastic cultural group of Thailand, which had been invited by a Thai peace organization.

All these actions by Mr Sitthi are against the interests of the Lao and Thai people, who have had since ancient times a beautiful heritage of neighborly and brotherly relations. This action fits in perfectly with Mr Sitthi Savetsila's policies of creating tension, confrontation, and making enemies. He is deeply involved with policies of confrontation and creation tension. Mr Sitthi has committed violent crimes against the Thai people. For example, the border incident between the Bo Ten District of Laos and Chatakarn District of Thailand. This incident devoured a lot of lives and wealth of Thai people. More so, he still continues to serve the interests of foreign countries. Mr Sitthi is still complying with the policies of foreign war lords, which is shown by his allowing a foreign arms warehouse to be built in Thailand. He is involved in the modern arms race of the American imperialists, which is making the Thai people carry ever heavier debt burdens.

If Mr Sitthi Savetsila continues to have a monopoly in foreign policy making, the currently confused relations between Laos and Thailand will become even more so, and will surely bring increased losses to the people of Laos and Thailand.

12597/9274

Saravane Province Military Confronts Thai-Based Infiltration

42060035a Vientiane KONGTHAP PASASON LAO
in Lao 2 Jun 88 p 3

[Report by Loukban Mai: "The Saravane Province Military Defends Its Localities"]

[Excerpt] Saravane Province is located in the south of our country. It is rich in natural resources, and its people have a tradition of bravery. Some areas, however, have a common border with Thailand, and this proximity facilitates the infiltration of expatriot Lao reactionaries, bandits, and other reactionaries.

Because of this proximity, in the past they have conducted various operations in Laos to divide us with lies and create confusion among the masses. They are still sending in reactionary Lao forces to create disturbances among the people in the localities. They have not cut back on their devious, cruel and seductive schemes to make our people believe foolishly in old-fashioned customs. Because of these factors and especially because of the schemes of the enemy, the defense of our territory and peace in the localities has been made difficult. In addition there were some people and some low level cadres without a high level of political awareness whose weakness the enemy was able to use in harassing various grassroots areas.

With regard to these problems the administration coordinated closely with national defense activities and trusted in education in the political policies of the party; they especially relied on the resolutions of the Fourth Party Congress and of the First Provincial Party Congress to help the people at the grassroots level to gain understanding, to recognize the difference between friend and enemy, to gain mastery in defending the nation, to resist every destructive scheme of the enemy, and to earn a living and build the nation in peace and happiness. The political unit of the military headquarters of Saravane Province took part in these activities. It carried out its duties to the extent of its abilities, and these included the following: conducting regular operations to search out and restrict the operations of the enemy, protecting the many different festivals and congresses, and helping to make the localities peaceful.

If in the course of these duties a situation [involving hostilities] arose, they were quickly prepared for combat as was needed. This was demonstrated by Battalion "G" and the unaffiliated companies, which were able to carry out their orders and follow regulations. In the quartermaster and technical areas they were at a high level of readiness in order to meet the needs of upper echelons. In addition their activities at the grassroots level helped make the localities peaceful.

08149

PRK Border Province Faces Insecurity; Guerrillas, Army Respond

42060035c Vientiane KONGTHAP PASASON LAO
in Lao 26 May 88 p 2

[Report by Bounthong Saisomboun: "The Guerrillas of Sanamsai District and National Defense and Peace-Keeping Activities"]

[Excerpt] Sanamsai District is a district affiliated with Attopeu Province. It is rich in natural resources, and therefore the enemy is constantly trying to cause destruction by infiltrating spies and bandits who work with expatriot Lao reactionaries to cause disruptions and make it difficult for the people here to make a living.

Sanamsai District has completed the organization of guerrilla and self-defense forces. The guerrilla forces total several hundred and are divided into two groups: the mobile group and the stationed group. The mobile group coordinates closely with the forces of central authority in order to counter the destructive schemes of the enemy. According to statistics derived from reports of the guerrilla committee of Sanamsai District during the period from 1985 until the present, they have not only served to keep the peace for the people of their locality but have also served honorably in defending the nation and building socialism. They countered quickly every destructive enemy operation mounted against the Lao revolution and performed their military duties well.

They also performed their political function of ideological guidance well in that they made examination, criticism and information the basis for creating cadres. And because upper echelons always took special care in providing guidance, it was assured that the solidarity and unity within the units would be 100 percent.

08149

Air Force Unit Holds Conference on Crashes

42060035d Vientiane KONGTHAP PASASON LAO
in Lao 21 Apr 88 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Air Force Battalion 'A' Opens a Conference to Investigate Aircraft Accidents"]

[Text] In order to improve flying efficiency in the future and to avoid accidents and steadily improve flight safety, Air Force Battalion "A" held a conference to investigate accidents and every incident which threatened flight safety in general and especially military training flights. The conference lasted 2 days: 29 and 30 March 1988. Those participating included the battalion committees, the demi-battalion committees, the affiliated units involved with this problem, the head technicians, and the officers involved.

During the conference the representatives from the technical branches exchanged views, went over reports about future techniques to be applied in their specialties, and compiled their views. The conference also dealt with the flight accidents of past years in order to learn the mistakes and causes which led to the accidents as well as learn the threats to training flight safety. This was done so that every section involved with flying would have a responsible committee capable of applying the technology involved in training aircraft. During the 2 days of the conference the responsible command officers of every branch were made aware of the important [factors] in using modern aircraft. At the end the conference agreed unanimously that each specialized branch must carry out its duties correctly according to the principles of the specialty and that the technical applications must be expertly handled. Because of its thorough investigation of the organization, the conference was able to end with an atmosphere of understanding and with solutions for the problems examined according to its goal.

08149

French Commercial Delegation Sees Sisavat Keobounphan

42060041d Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
31 May 88 pp 1, 4

[Text] On the afternoon of 29 May Mr Sisavat Keobounphan, Vientiane Capital administrative chairman, welcomed a delegation from the French company (Inter-Gra-ibi Trades and Technacon) led by M. Michel Doumeng, chairman of the company's board of directors, on their official visit to the LPDR.

During the discussions held in a pleasant atmosphere, Mr Sisavat Keobounphan spoke of the pace of economic improvement and reconstruction within the LPDR and especially in Vientiane Capital at the present time, a subject of great interest to the delegation.

The delegation arrived on 28 May to discuss potential cooperation regarding agriculture, industrial trade, manufacturing, and communications and transport with the government of the LPDR, and the delegation returned to their country today.

9884

GDR Aid to Vientiane Handicrafts Shops

42060041a Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
13 May 88 p 1

[Text] A ceremony was held a short time ago to sign a memorandum on the handicrafts development project in the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts between Mr Phimmaha, chief of the Light Industry Department, and Mr (Kafus), chief of the GDR delegation for Regional Industry and the Food Industry, in front of a number of high officials from both sides.

The memorandum assessed development projects for 10 handicrafts workshops in Laos that were started in 1986-88, and also stated a plan for continuing the project from 1988 to 1990 based on mutual economic assistance between both nations.

9884

PRK Border Province Secretary Cites Weaknesses

42060040c Vientiane PASASON in Lao 20 Jun 88 p 2

[Excerpts] Even though Attopeu Province has strong potential in agriculture and animal husbandry, Comrade Thongkham Chanthaphone, the province secretary, confirms there are many problems that must be resolved in order to expand and utilize these potentials effectively. The primary problem is the roads in Attopeu, which has the 60 km long Route 15 and 194 km long Route 18. Commuting can be done only during the dry season; travel is extremely difficult during the rainy season inside the province and to other provinces. A second problem: basic markets have been eliminated, state stores and collective stores are not growing and are losing money, and the prices for agricultural products have dropped to the lowest in the country. A major problem is the weak and paralyzed leadership of the provincial party committee, which makes a lot of mistakes, while working units throughout the administration do not get enough attention. Because of such conditions, food production in Attopeu is not growing and has even decreased in some sectors. Agricultural production decreased because of the drought in 1987. There was a lot of damage, and paddy revenues were only 311 kilograms per person. Concerning policies for improving and expanding agricultural production in the future,

the provincial party secretary also stated that he will push cattle husbandry, by making each family raise a cow. If a family does not invest in a cow, the state will buy one for them to raise and share the final products with them appropriately.

12597/9274

Cadres Face Drop in Living Standards, Use of Gold Noted

42060041b Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
2 Jun 88 pp 2, 4

[Excerpts] [Question] 1. Why is it that prices for some merchandise are now very high, while the salary of cadres stays the same? What will happen to the cadres' living standard if this keeps up?

2. We all took part in the revolution with the intention of eliminating the undesirable remnants of the old society and to build a bright future without the exploitation by feudalism and capitalism. However, there are many problems. One is that there are a large number of cadres of different ranks and cadres with many decades of revolutionary service who have to use as much as two to three (bat) [measure of gold] from their own pockets in order to purchase land on which they want to have their houses built. This has been the practice not only in the Vientiane Capital area. In many other provinces the land around the municipal area is all owned by people, as well as the rural areas that are hard to reach. Can you comment on this?

[Answer] 1. We have already discussed the prices for goods by stating the law that there is one price for buying and selling. This refers to the price that is agreed to by the buyer as well as the seller, who go by the prices that are set freely in the market. Please check VIENTIANE MAI for 28 May 1988.

2. Our government controls all the resources in the country, including the most important functions of trade, banking, foreign trade, and communications and transport, and these hold the key to the national economy. The fourth session of the fifth plenum describes ownership in various ways, including individual rights for land and housing. This clearly indicates the correct and just policy of the party and the government. What you probably meant was that when low salaried cadres want to have their houses built they have to use their own money, but who built the houses for the others?

The plenum also stated that cadres have the right to ownership of the land allocated by the government, and for management and production, but they are not then permitted to sell it to others. Individuals who own land that was inherited from their parents or that was purchased legally from others have the right to carry out a business on it or to sell it to someone else.

As we have discussed briefly, we hope you understand that it is legal to buy and sell land when that land is legally owned. Therefore, no matter what the rank of a cadre, if they want to own land that belongs to someone else they must buy it at the price agreed upon by both parties.

9884

**Atmospherics of Vientiane-Kongkhai Trade Fair,
Tax Collection**

42060040a Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
21 Jun 88 pp 1, 4

[Text] The second week of the Hatsuifong and Nongkhai Friendship Fair is progressing in a happy atmosphere. Merchants from both banks come and happily trade such popular goods from Laos as meats of wild animals, dried fish, preserved animal skins and beverages, and such popular Thai goods as consumer items, clothes, and fruits. Approximately two-fifths of the merchants and buyers are from Vientiane and three-fifths are from Nongkhai. Their customers are Lao, Thais and foreigners. An average of 10,000 people attend the fair every day. Fair officials report that taxes collected during the first week amounted to more than 1 million kip. They also stated that the fair site will be improved, and that display shelves for merchandise and paths will be built in an organized fashion. Currently it is overly crowded. When it rains, it is difficult for merchants and customers to move around. A road from Xieng Khouane to the fair grounds is being built now under contract with the Vientiane Municipality Road and Bridge Construction Company. After paving is completed in 2 days, traffic will run smoothly.

12597/9274

**Column Wants Border Market Transactions in
Kip Only, Not Baht**

42060040b Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
21 Jun 88 pp 2, 4

[Talking With the Readers Column: "Weak Point That Must Be Corrected"]

[Excerpts] Dear Editor, have you gone to the Hatsuifong-Nongkhai Friendship Fair yet? It is refreshing to see people from both banks of the river trading again. It has helped to increase the income of both the Lao and Thai people in this area. This is a good event; it should be continued, but with regulations and an orderly market, such as orderly exits and entrances, regulations for tax collection, trade and hygiene, and various other services for officials, buyers and merchants. I went there last week; there were thousands of Lao, Thais and foreigners moving around. However, it is too bad that the fair grounds are too small. I would like to urge the officials involved to reorganize the merchandise shelves and paths, and to move a little to the northern side. They

should make the merchandise display shelves more orderly to make it more convenient for buyers and sellers. What do you think about that?

[Answer] Another major problem creating difficulties for the general public is that financial transactions at the fair should be allowed only in kip. Why only kip? We want to maintain legality and the value of the kip. The most important thing is to show the nation's independence. This is more valuable than anything. Only in colonies are transactions freely allowed in foreign currencies. In an independent country, foreign currencies must be exchanged from the local currency before they can be used for payment.

There is a money exchange at the fair, but the editor could not get in, so I could not inquire about how money can be exchanged and the exchange rates. However, it appears that the money exchange is for merchants or people from Thailand only; there is no money exchange for those from Laos. Most Lao people like the easy way and do not follow regulations so they do not think how they should act to protect the nation's independence. When they have baht in their hands, they just spend it without thinking about the law.

Consequently, the weak point we should look into is to whether violations of regulations come from not only the other side of the river, but from this side also. For example, we should review uncontrolled payments in baht. This weak point must be discussed in the public relations domain again. Money exchanges must be set up with daily rates of exchange posted in big letters so they are easily seen. All persons must be forbidden to do transactions in baht or other foreign currencies in the fair grounds, with only those in kip being allowed. Detailed regulations should be listed with the penalties for violations.

Consequently, the weak point we should look into is to whether violations of regulations come from not only the other side of the river, but from this side also. For example, we should review uncontrolled payments in baht. This weak point must be discussed in the public relations domain again. Money exchanges must be set up with daily rates of exchange posted in big letters so they are easily seen. All persons must be forbidden to do transactions in baht or other foreign currencies in the fair grounds, with only those in kip being allowed. Detailed regulations should be listed with the penalties for violations.

Then the state will gain foreign currency and maintain order. The editor would like to praise the currency exchange for Thai people when they return to their country. However, I would like to criticize their being allowed to freely buy and sell in baht even though there were officials and currency exchange posts. If it is not a provocative act, then what is it? Should we just simply ignore it?

12597/9274

Columnist Backs Market Price Changes; Food Goes Up

42060041c Vientiane VIENTIANE MAI in Lao
28 May 88 pp 2, 4

[Excerpts] [Question] 1. Why isn't the value of cash and credit the same? How are these values set? For example, in state stores such as Store No 4 in Chanthaboury District the difference between the cash and credit prices for the same model of color TV is 60,000 kip, and the same goes for other merchandise.

2. Why is it that the prices for material goods in each ministry and equivalent organizations are not the same? For example, the selling price for Nong Teng fish in some ministries is 420 kip per kg, while it is 470 kip per kg in others (when coupons are used).

3. Why is the price of food concentrate so high? In addition to this, the animal husbandry and agricultural sectors refuse to take credit for purchasing animal food concentrate and small pigs for raising. Will cadres of low rank like us have a chance to raise animals? As we all know, this is because the party and government give us coupons and 500 kip in cash. If this practice continues, won't it come into conflict with the party's policy for promoting the family economy?

[Answer] 1. Have you ever seen cartoons for cash merchants and credit merchants? You will see two different things. The cash merchant is refined and healthy. He lives well and wears good clothing, while the credit merchant wears worn clothing, has untidy hair, and carries a sour expression. His safe contains only paper credit. What do you think about when you see that cartoon? Which one would you choose? I think you already know the answer. If you should go home and ask your wife to buy fish on credit, see if your wife would be willing to do it. If not, this is the answer.

2. There is one price for goods, which means the price agreed upon by the buyer and the seller. The price will be high or low depending on what the merchandise is. It is natural that prices will be lower when there is a lot of merchandise and higher when merchandise is scarce.

A person who engages in trade must be resourceful and must know the market. They must know the principles for moving merchandise and market prices. For example, rice trading by the government in Vientiane Capital has never been in line with the trade pattern because it forces cadres to buy at a certain price. For example, the price for rice is always a little over 100 kip per kg for cadres and government employees, but is only 60 kip per kg when there is a lot of rice in the free markets at harvest time. However, the state rice trade still forces the cadres to pay 100 kip per kg. This is not right, because it is not in line with the economic management set by the party and the government.

Pricing is very important. If it is set properly trade will grow, but if it is not there will be losses and finally

bankruptcy. A good tradesman will not expect a huge profit. He will be satisfied with a small profit if he can sell his goods and the money will be circulated. But if he sells goods at high prices the sales volume will be low, and as a result the money will circulate slowly. This will slow down his business. Would you choose a small profit with a high sales volume or a large profit with a small sales volume or no sales at all. This is the answer which confirms the fact that those who have a large sales volume will do good business.

3. We have already discussed this under 1 and 2 above. Refusing to accept credit has nothing whatsoever to do with promoting the family economy. Let's go back to buying rice in Vientiane Capital. Cadres can now buy rice from the stocking market using credit. However, at the same time the market needs cash to purchase the rice from the people so it can be sold to cadres. Then how will the it get cash in order to make rice purchases unless it sells in cash to the cadres. At the same time, the cadres must also have cash to purchase material goods and food. This problem will soon be solved, and we ask you to be patient. If there is no solution for this our trade will continue under the old concept forever.

9884

Army Sawmill Turns Profit for State

42060035e Vientiane KONGTHAP PASASON LAO
in Lao 21 Apr 88 p 2

[Report by Loukban Mai: "Army Sawmill No. 2 After Becoming a Business"]

[Excerpt] Army Sawmill No 2 with its party committee and administrative committee is among those which changed to become a socialist business. The change has been in effect since early in 1987.

The leadership committee adopts plans for each period, and at the end of each period there is a summary and evaluation of that which remains, of that which continues, of their mastery of production for self-sufficiency in all areas, of their conduct of the system of economic accountability with regard to socialist business, and of the abolition of the arbitrary system with its subsidies completely. During this period of business accountability one could see that the living standard of the cadres and workers improved a great deal. They were able to exceed the plans of upper echelons for exploiting timber and production. They were able to exploit a total of 5,227 cubic meters of timber, which exceeded the plan by 1,224 cubic meters or 30 percent. They were able to clear 18 km of logging roads, build 14 bridges, produce 2,027 cubic meters of finished lumber, and achieve an income of 93,589,628 kip. Of this 74,164,346 kip went for expenses and 19,425,286 kip were profit. The obligation to the state amounted to 6,370,464 kip. The profit for the factory was that which was left after the obligation to the state was fulfilled and the obligation to the

locality of 5,076,899 kip was fulfilled. In comparison with past years the total income and profits were much greater, and the standard of living of the workers and cadres has steadily improved. The highest monthly salary averaged 13,450 kip and the lowest 4,500 kip.

08149

Editorial Backs Business, Individual Initiative

42060037c Vientiane PASASON in Lao

24 May 88 pp 1, 4

[Editorial: "Implement Workers' and the Collectives' Right to Mastery in Enterprises"]]

[Excerpts] In order to convert to the absolute accountability for business we must focus on the masses and on the practice of the right to ownership for the working people and for the collective mastery of the working people in enterprises. We must make it into a mass movement where they emulate each other with regard to the absolute business accountability mechanism. Now we can no longer speak of the collective mastery of the masses and say that the masses have collective mastery. Instead, we must talk about the movement of the masses to change to business accountability which stimulates revolutionary fervor regarding the fundamental ideas of individual benefits that are related to collective benefits and benefits for society as a whole. In order to accomplish this we must do some basic work. For example, first of all we must explain to the masses so they will understand clearly that the shift to business accountability means exercising the right of ownership and the benefits for the workers themselves. These practices must be done in a unified manner relative to the three benefits, and regular emulation must be carried out on the basis of the practice of business accountability for each individual and for collective workers with comprehensive techniques. For example, we must organize the emulation to save collective properties by means of inventory, assessment, assigning responsibilities and rights of ownership to individuals and work groups, and assigning jobs in work units for managing properties such as workshops, machinery, and electrical supplies. The individuals or collective groups that are assigned to those properties will become the real owners; they could receive remuneration or they could be fined, depending on the outcome of their management or control of the properties and disbursement based on production. They

are given authority to organize and pay for labor. This type of business accountability that reaches individuals and working groups implements the right of ownership of individuals and collective working people. They have the right to their own work, and the three benefits are assured. We must use this type of business accountability as an emulation process to convert it to a mass movement for increasing the quantity and quality of products. We must practice thrift in resisting lazy, shiftless and extravagant behavior. We will then be able to mobilize a strong revolutionary fervor regarding the correct economic motivation. This means exercising the right of ownership by the masses in selecting and assigning managerial cadres for various work sections of enterprises, and for participating in discussions and making decisions regarding important problems in business production and for management regulations within the enterprise. For the immediate future we must sound out the opinions of the masses prior to making the decision to promote management cadres. In developing and expanding the roles of the party organization, trade union, youth union and Lao women's organization as decisive conditions for carrying out the right of ownership by the working people in enterprises we must, first of all, carefully develop party units that are strong in every way for state enterprises so they will be strong and able to guide various mass organizations, and also to work in coordination with the mass organizations in emulation to convert to the economic accountability mechanism. The government employs leadership for the management within state enterprises. This does not mean that the comprehensive guidance of the party chapter can replace the leaders in making management decisions in enterprises. Otherwise, this will be a violation of the state laws, and the leaders will be deprived of their responsibility. This will also be considered the regular role of the party, and we will forget that the important role of the party organization is to train, mobilize and organize the masses so as to promote the right to ownership by the masses in making decisions, assigning and firing cadres, and in checking the leaders' work. On the other hand, the enterprise management leaders who are both representatives of the state and representatives of the collective working people must know how to focus on party organizations and mass organizations, and must have a real respect for the right to ownership by the masses.

9884

Lange Terms Fiji Pacific's First Police State
42000434 Sydney THE SYDNEY MORNING
HERALD in English 25 Jun 88 p 17

[By David Barber]

[Text] Wellington, Friday: Fiji's new internal security decree has turned the republic into the South Pacific's first police state and raised prospects of a mass flight of Indian refugees, New Zealand's prime minister, Mr Lange, said today.

Mr Lange described the decree as Brigadier Sitiveni Rabuka's third coup, and said it gave him, as home affairs minister and chief of the army, total power through the police and army and destroyed all personal rights and liberties.

He said the decree was a clear signal that the regime did not want Fijian Indians to remain.

"The Indian community is being put on notice by Rabuka that it can expect to have a life fraught with difficulty, fraught with peril," he said.

Mr Lange said that if the decree's powers were used, New Zealand would face refugee applications.

"That does not mean New Zealand can absorb half a million people," he warned.

His office released copies of the decree which gives police and the military power to shoot to kill suspects

resisting arrest, and allows for 2 years' detention without trial (renewable for a further 2 years) without any reason having to be given.

"The definition of terrorism is so wide that it would actually catch a housewife carrying a bag of rice if someone who was suspected of being a terrorist may eat it," Mr Lange said.

He advised New Zealand tourists not to go to Fiji and said New Zealand lawyers engaged to defend those arrested there faced detention and deportation.

The powers of the New Zealand Embassy to resist were severely restricted by the new law.

Mr Lange said he was particularly worried about the University of the South Pacific in Suva, which employed New Zealand and Australian lecturers.

Staff appointments would now be controlled by Brigadier Rabuka and the university could be closed.

New Zealand's minister for foreign affairs, Mr Russell Marshall, telephoned his Australian counterpart, Mr Hayden, to discuss the measure yesterday.

Other South Pacific Forum countries, Britain and the United States are also being consulted.

Mr Lange said New Zealand was reviewing its moves to normalise relations with Fiji and reconsidering last February's resumption of aid though humanitarian assistance would continue

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Editorial Assesses USSR Diplomacy
42070141c Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai 1 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] Vietnam's announcement about its troop withdrawal from Cambodia might not be the direct result of the talks between Thai and Soviet delegations, and it might be a coincidence that the announcement occurred during the Thai cabinet's visit to the USSR because Soviet leaders had announced that they could not force Vietnam, which is an independent country.

Even though these developments are not directly related, it is noteworthy that during its visit to the Soviet Union, the cabinet met with high level Soviet leaders, starting with Prime Minister Ryzhkov and Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party, and had a candid discussion about the Cambodia issue.

From it, Soviet leaders learned the impact on Thailand from the conflict in Cambodia, which has lingered for 9 years. The leaders of the two sides agreed that the conflict in Cambodia must be solved politically. In addition, the Soviet leaders also promised to persuade Vietnam to join in the international conference in Jakarta to look for ways to end the problems in Cambodia.

The past few years, many Soviet attitudes under the leadership of Gorbachev can be perceived as having changed toward regional conflicts. Most obvious is the withdrawal of around 115,000 troops from Afghanistan.

In addition, the Soviet leaders also are trying to reduce world tensions by having many summit talks with American leaders and are looking for ways to improve international relations. They also suggested that the Soviet's withdrawal from Afghanistan would be an example to make Vietnam withdraw its troops from Cambodia.

12587/12223

Report on Private Sector-USSR Trade Moves
*42070141a Bangkok BAN MUANG in Thai
22 May 88 p 6*

[Text] Mr Pharon Isarasena Na Ayuthaya, chairman of the Industry Council of Thailand, disclosed that Thailand and the USSR have agreed to invest in a trading company for the two countries. Named "ASDAC," the Soviet government and the Soviet Bank Foreign Trade hold shares. The Sri Krung Company, Bangkok Bank, and Mit Siam Company are private sector firms holding shares for Thailand.

These companies carry out trade between the two countries, namely, exports from Thailand to the USSR and goods purchased from the USSR for sale in third countries.

The chairman of the Industry Council stated that his visit has made the Thai private sector more interested in trading with the USSR and that the premier of the USSR also wants to increase trade with Thailand. The chairman thinks that during the past 4-5 years Thailand has improved its economic base. This has made foreign countries want to trade with Thailand. There has been more investment from Japan, Korea and Thailand, and the USSR also wants to invest in Thailand.

Mr Chatri Sophonphanit chairman of the Thai Banker's Association, commented that during the private sector's Soviet visit they had met with leading Soviet economic figures who told us that they want to increase their trade volume with Thailand and sell us such goods as fertilizer and machinery. Thailand has been buying machinery from the Soviets for a long time, and there have been problems with parts, such as for water pumps. The USSR wants to solve these problems.

As for Thai goods that will be exported to the Soviet Union, such as hides, tapioca products and textiles, he hopes that as the trade atmosphere between the two countries improves, exports of these products will increase.

A reporter inquired whether the USSR desired to increase its trade volume with Thailand to equal that between Thailand and Japan. Mr Chatri stated that Mr Ryzhkov, the USSR's prime minister, stated that if it just equals, that between Thailand and China, it would be good enough.

12587/12223

Prem Pledges To Review Status of USSR College Degrees
*42070141d Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai
21 May 88 pp 1, 18*

[Excerpt] Yesterday (20 May) Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanon and the cabinet visited Kiev in the Ukraine as part of their visit to the Soviet Union. Early in the morning, the prime minister and his party rode around town and visited the historic museums and architectural sites of Kiev.

Later the prime minister allowed around ten students studying in Kiev to meet at the guest house provided by the Soviets for him. Gen Prem questioned the Thai students in detail and learned that they had received scholarships from the USSR. The prime minister told them that problems arise because the USSR gives scholarships without going through the right channels, namely, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Civil Service Commission. Instead, the Soviets contact the students directly. Nevertheless, Thailand has agreed with the Soviet government that scholarships granted by the Soviet government must go through the right channels. He noted the desires of Thai students in the USSR for accreditation. The prime minister said there

shouldn't be a problem. If Western Europe and the U.S. accredits Soviet education then there shouldn't be a problem with the [Thai] Civil Service Commission accrediting them either. The prime minister's answer pleased all the Thai students very much.

12587/12223

Prem Spokesman Comments on Trade Ties With Hungary

42070141e Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai
26 May 88 pp 1, 20

[Excerpt] Mr Pramaj Fai-upra, the THAI RAT reporter who flew with Gen Prem Tinsulanon on his visit to Russia, Finland and Hungary, reported yesterday evening that General Prem's team had safely arrived at Budapest Airport in Hungary. Hungarian Premier Karoly Grosz led the welcoming team at the airport and took the prime minister and the team to a government guest house. In the afternoon the prime minister laid a wreath at the Cemetery of Heroes in Budapest, then went to Hungarian Parliament to have private talks with the prime minister of Hungary.

Mr Wichai Wirawaithaya, the government's spokesman, expounded on the talks between the Thai and Hungarian prime ministers. He said that the Hungarian prime minister told General Prem that Hungary has been following Thailand's prosperity and sees the admirable progress the Thai economy has made. He said that Hungary's prime minister expressed his congratulations for Thailand's progress. Concerning international relations, he stated that improved relations between the United States and the USSR are a good sign and he agrees that the problem in Cambodia must be solved. In the area of trade, he said that trade between Hungary and Thailand should be expanded, and that Hungary will cooperate in the areas of buses, railways, communications, food, light industry, and medical equipment. Hungary would like to co-operate in various projects, and are happy to grant loans to Thailand. However, he requested Thailand not to impose double taxation and asked Thailand to solve the problem of entry visas for Hungarian businessmen. Thailand's prime minister has promised him that the visa problem will be solved promptly and extended an invitation to the Hungarian prime minister to visit Thailand.

Mr Wichai disclosed that General Prem explained to the Hungarian prime minister that Thai businessmen were with him, and there would be discussions about what Thailand can sell to Hungary. However, as a start, he said we would like to have Hungary buy agricultural products from us, such as rice, rubber, tin, fruit and vegetables plastics, canned foods, and coffee. Mr Wichai also added that a group of Hungarian businessmen will pay a visit to Thailand this year.

12587/12223

Editorial Views Voter Apathy, Election Fraud

42000454a Bangkok THE NATION in English
27 Jul 88 p 4

[Excerpts] Only 37.5 percent of eligible voters in Bangkok voted in the general election on Sunday. This was the second lowest voter turnout in the country, next to Samut Songkram which registered a turnout of only 35.9 percent.

The turnout average nationwide was nearly 64 percent.

This is not a new phenomenon. Bangkok seldom sees a turnout higher than 40 percent. But we think it is time to find out why.

On average, the eligible voters in Bangkok are better educated, better off economically, closer to the scene of national politics, have easier access to information and better transportation than their counterparts in the provinces. Yet so many of them don't bother to vote.

There could be many other reasons behind the customary low voter turnout in Bangkok. But could it be that political awareness in the provinces has been rising so rapidly especially in the Northeast, and thus reflected in the high rates of voter turnout?

Many villages, some with several hundreds of eligible voters, reported a perfect turnout of 100 percent. Did all the voters voluntarily go to vote? Or did they actually vote by themselves? In spite of widespread reports about northerners leaving home for jobs in Bangkok and overseas, it is amazing that all the voters in these villages happened to be home on the election day. Amazing, isn't it? (The official explanation is that local authorities have regularly purged the list of eligible voters to exclude those who have moved out).

Another explanation on the high rate of voter turnout in the provinces is that political parties are extremely efficient in mobilizing their supporters, mostly through influential local community leaders. This, however, begs the question why they cannot do the same in Bangkok. Is it because what they did in the provinces were illegal and they wouldn't be able to get away with them in Bangkok?

Of course, Bangkokians should be ashamed of the low turnout in Bangkok. But it is doubtful whether people in those provinces with exceptionally high rates of turnout could really be proud of themselves either.

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MP Supatra Masdit Comments on Copyright Issue

42070141b Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai 3 Jun 88 p 3

[Excerpts] Supatra (AKA Aeow), the better half of Big Pathomphong Kasetsuk, is among those touched by the proverb that politicians don't have real friends, but do

have permanent enemies. She never thought she would experience this herself. Ms Aeow's 2nd electoral district in Nakorn Sri Thammarat was jammed. Supatra has served the people many terms as a Democrat MP, but this time she has a rival with whom she does not want to compete, namely, Gen Harn Lilanon, a former senior member of the Democratic Party but now running as a member of the People's Party or 10 January Group.

Would copyrights be a problem because of the violent controversy that caused the dissolution of parliament, a KACHOK KHAO reporter joked?

Supatra smiled happily and said it should not be any problem, that knowledgeable persons know that the government's draft was thrown out. The significant parts of the Democrat Party draft was submitted as a replacement. This was the entirety of the new draft. As for the rest of the DP draft, the fight goes on and we must accept the majority viewpoint.

She said that if we scream and complain, then we appear to be spoil sports.

She said the most disappointing thing is that while she was assisting the experts in drafting a separate bill exclusively for protection of software, she had lost her chance because Parliament was dissolved first.

12587/12223

Industrialists, Chamber of Commerce Leaders Influence Noted

42070150a Bangkok LAK THAI in Thai
14 JI 188 pp 32, 33

[Text] A leading private business association that has been accepted by the government and that has been placed on the Joint Public-Private Committee for Solving the Economic Problems is the Thai Banking Association, which is composed of 16 domestic commercial banks and a number of foreign banks with branches in Thailand. There are two other major business organizations. One is the Industrial Council of Thailand, which was organized in place of the Thai Industrial Association, which was disbanded. The Industrial Council is a relatively new organization that was formed by the passage of the Industrial Council of Thailand Organization Act. It is under the control of the Ministry of Industry. The other organization, which has been a major organization for a long time, is the Thai Chamber of Commerce, which is composed of leading businessmen. The Thai Chamber of Commerce was formed when the Thai Merchants Association, provincial chambers of commerce, and various business associations joined together. Most of the merchants and businessmen who established this organization were important agricultural merchants and industrialists. Many of these people are dead now. Those still alive continue to manage the Chamber of Commerce. In the past, the Thai Chamber of Commerce was a very important organization. It was

the only organization that important merchants would join or cooperate with. Later on, there was a split within the Thai Chamber of Commerce. One group of merchants, particularly industrialists, split away and formed a new organization, the Thai Industrial Association. They tried to win a greater role for their association on the industrial front. Later on, as industry expanded, the role of the Thai Industrial Association expanded, too. In particular, the number of industrial branches of various types increased greatly. Today, the Industrial Council of Thailand has 42 branches. Preparations are being made to elect a new committee. This will be the first committee elected since the passage of the Industrial Council of Thailand Act. The election will take place around the middle of July. The role played by the Industrial Council of Thailand has expanded constantly in accord with the law. One of its major functions is to issue point of origin certificates for industrial goods produced in Thailand.

The Thai Chamber of Commerce was once a huge organization. But after the Thai Industrial Council was formed, the Chamber of Commerce had to restructure itself in order to clearly separate its roles from those of the council. This occurred just when the secretary general of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr Thapana Bunnak, who was in charge of Chamber of Commerce operations, concluded his term in office. He took a new position and put Mr Prayun Thaloengsi, the former director-general of the Department of Internal Trade, in his place. Director-General Prayun was a technocrat and so he changed the structure of the Thai Chamber of Commerce. Based on the new structure, there was a large committee to stipulate policies and work methods. The executive committee was responsible for overseeing activities and ensuring that things were done in accord with the policies. The work was divided into five groups: administration and member services, operations, cooperation with the public sector, cooperation with other organizations, and cooperation with foreign organizations. At the same time, one branch committee was disbanded, reducing the number from 10 to 9, and three new branch committees were formed for a total of 13 [as published]. It's worth noting that all three of the newly formed branch committees were involved with industrial matters. One monitored industry in general. Another monitored the handicrafts industry. The third monitored the petrochemical industry.

In accord with the new structure of Thai Chamber of Commerce, important people in industrial circles were brought in to serve as committee members. One of these was Mr Asa Sarasin, the managing director of the Pha Daeng Industry Company and the younger brother of Mr Phong Sarasin. He once served as the Thai ambassador to the United States and had only recently become a businessman. He was appointed chairman of the branch committee in charge of monitoring industry in general. At the same time, Mr Thapana Bunnak, who was then serving as the managing director of the CCIC Company, which is involved in promoting investments from Taiwan, was asked to serve as the chairman of the committee in charge of promoting member activities. Mr Yuk

Na Thalang, the president of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, was made the chairman of the investment promotion committee. The banker Mr Suwit Wangli was appointed vice chairman. Mr Pramuan Sutthiwong from the Siam Cement Corporation was put in charge of export promotion. Mrs Chanat Piya-ui from the Dusit Thani Hotel was put in charge of promoting tourism. Two important agricultural merchants, Mr Saman Ophatwong and Mr Kamchai Iamsuri, were put in charge of rice trading. Mr Pricha Tanprasoet was made responsible for corn and upland field crops. Mr Sukit Wangli, the president of the Cassava Association, was made responsible for cassava. Dr At Taolanon from the CP Company

was put in charge of agro-industrial development. Mr Prathip Dieuphairat from the Thai Petrochemical Industry Company and Mr Sippanon Kethat, the senior manager of the National Petrochemical Company, were put in charge of chemical industry development. Mr Roy W. Wayland, the senior manager of the Esso Company, and Mr Sophon Suphaphong from the Bangchak Refinery were put in charge of energy. Other important businessmen were involved in other activities in order to support the new structure of the Thai Chamber of Commerce.

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POLITICAL

Disunity in Nghia Binh Party Organization

Criticism, Self-Criticism

42090236 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
19 Mar 88 p 1

[Text] Carrying out the campaign to purify and increase the combativeness of the state organizations and the state apparatus, and make social relations wholesome, nearly three-fourths of the party organizations at the provincial and municipal levels and of the central departments and sectors have completed their self-criticism and criticism and have recapitulated their work after a year of implementing the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress. Thirty provincial and municipal party organizations have completed collective reviewing by party committee members, with the secretaries, chairmen, and vice chairmen carrying out reviews with regard to responsibilities and moral quality. Many provinces and municipalities have carried out self-criticism and criticism down to the level of individual party committee members. At the district and ward levels, more than 60 percent of the organs and units have completed self-criticism and criticism by cadres and party members. In Ha Bac, Hai Hung, Dong Thap, and Cuu Long provinces the district party organizations have essentially completed that task. The contents of the reviews have stressed full understanding of the party's viewpoint of all-around renovation, tied in with the thought, responsibility, work style, and life style of each individual. The internal affairs organs of the party organizations have made a real contribution to examining and reaching conclusions regarding cadres involved in the negative incidents, and have helped the party committees more accurately evaluate the moral quality and ability of each individual.

In the course of self-criticism and criticism it has become increasingly clear that during the past year the party committees of the provinces and municipalities have made many all-out efforts to concentrate their leadership on overcoming the severe economic-social problems, devoted themselves to the agricultural production front, boldly studied and experimented with renovating the mechanism, and encouraged the economic components to develop commodity production. Many provinces have gradually implemented the policy of stimulating production by means of alliances and joint operations in producing and purchasing agricultural products, perfecting the contracting of output, and expanding winter production. The provincial and municipal party committees have perfected their organization, redeployed their key cadres at the basic, provincial, and municipal levels, eliminated more than 5,000 organizational entities, and reduced the number of intermediate and duplicate organizations. The people who were redundant were sent to the basic level or were sent to undertake training or supplement the production units.

The collective reviews by the party committees have made evident the weaknesses and deficiencies of the cadres, such as organizing the explaining and concretization of the stands and policies of the party and state in their units still being slow and confused, especially the task of stimulating the development of the five economic components among the people. The cadres still attend many meetings and have not set aside the necessary time to go to the basic level, lend assistance, and accept ultimate responsibility for, along with the basic level, resolving difficulties, correcting distortions, and affirming the new elements of the new management model and new mechanism. Within the corps of cadres, some of the comrades are old and weak and don't like agitation; some ward, district, and sector cadres who are promoted to key cadres still lack general ability and are slow in resolving the problems posed by life. A number of party organizations in which there has been a loss of solidarity, such as Thanh Hoa, Nghia Binh, Tay Ninh, etc., have allowed the prolongation of the situation of partialism, factionalism, and a lack of truthfulness in struggle. That has hampered the leadership of the party and weakened the confidence of the masses in the party.

In order to improve the ability and moral quality of the cadres and party members the cadres, party members, and party organizations must take steps to strengthen the party building work, do a good job of carrying out the major campaigns, strengthening the weak and deficient basic units, and gradually raise the level of uniformity among the basic party organizations. At present, efforts must be made to strengthen solidarity in the party committees. Especially, the key cadres must exemplify an offensive revolutionary will, be centers for unifying and rallying the ranks, concentrate on victoriously fulfilling the political missions, resolve satisfactorily, with reason and sentiment, the contradictions that arise in the course of economic-social activities, and build ranks of cadres and party members who are pure, capable, and able to fulfill the new missions.

Reasons for Lack of Solidarity

42090236 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
10 Jun 88 p 3

[Text] In its 19 March 1988 issue the newspaper NHAN DAN reported that "Some party organizations in which there is a lack of solidarity, such as Thanh Hoa, Nghia Binh, Tay Ninh, etc., have prolonged the situation of partialism, factionalism, and a lack of truthfulness in struggle." Upon reading that, many cadres and party members in Nghia Binh Province believe that that is the truth, that the party newspaper hit the hammer on the head, but a small number of leadership cadres at all levels are still puzzled.

Is it true that there is a lack of solidarity in the Nghia Binh Party organization? What are the reasons for that situation?

A Truly Painful Thing

Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh are provinces with resolute revolutionary tradition and rich economic potential. In revolutionary struggle and in the two resistance wars, the cadres, party members, and people of the two provinces shared the good and the bad and lived and died side-by-side. After the homeland was unified Quang Binh and Binh Dinh, as was the case with many other provinces, were merged to form Nghia Binh Province, which provided them with additional political, ideological, economic, and cultural strength with which to build socialism and defend the homeland. On the other hand, it must be admitted that an unfavorable objective reality is that the province is more than 200 kilometers long, the provincial capital is in the south, and difficult transportation and communications have affected the leadership and guidance by the provincial organs of the basic level, especially such distant districts as Tra Bong, Binh Son, and Son Ha.

It is regrettable that during the Fourth Congress of the provincial party organization (October 1980) and the congresses of the district party organizations prior to that, there were signs of the emergence of a lack of solidarity. The congresses of a number of party organizations in the northern part of the province recommended that the province be divided. At the congress of the provincial party organization there was rather fierce competition over the election of members to the new provincial party committee.

Those events not only were not promptly analyzed in order to reach conclusions and rectify them, but the "demand that the province be divided" and the concept of "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai" noisily and clamorously spread.

In fact, the "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai" problem has existed for years on the part of some high-ranking cadres in the following instances:

First, in investment in capital construction, because of failure to democratize and make things public, the people thought that it was "heavy on the inside, light on the outside," or vice versa (in fact, investment was not yet based on economic effectiveness but still tended toward equalization).

Second, in assigning and promoting cadres, because of a lack of standardization and continued emphasis on sentiment, public opinion was that it was a matter of local partialism (in fact, because the provincial capital was in the south, where the living conditions of the workers and civil servants were still very difficult, cadres in districts in the northern part of the province seldom wanted to work at the provincial offices, so most of the cadres of the provincial bureaus, departments, and sectors were people from the southern districts).

Third, there was also jealousy regarding commendations and awards.

Fourth, in the struggle against negativism and the imposition of discipline, because of poor communications some people thought that one party or another was protected by an "umbrella."

It may be said that never have the thoughts of "divide the province" and "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai" been so wide and deep as recently. They have even been made public and "legalized" in the form of a recommendation by the Provincial People's Council, and a recommendation by the standing committee of the provincial party committee, which unanimously recommended that the province be divided.

In this newspaper article, I will not deal with the question of whether or not the province should be divided, for that is an extremely complicated question. If a correct conclusion is to be reached, the question must be considered in the totality of factors. I will only deal with the loss of internal solidarity

The Root of the Matter

At the conference to recapitulate the 1987 propaganda-education work in the province, a member of the standing committee, and head of the propaganda-education department of the Quang Ngai City party committee, expressed a very sincere opinion: "The desire to divide the province is on the part of some leadership cadres, not of the majority of the people and cadres at the basic level." The broad masses also affirm that the matter about which the people are concerned is not whether Quang Ngai or Binh Dinh cadres are the leaders at the provincial level, but whether or not they have sufficient moral quality and ability to lead, go all out in serving the people, and enable production and living standards to rise.

If you believe that the loss of solidarity happened because the provinces were merged, ask yourself why in Mo Duc District there was such a serious loss of solidarity in the standing committee of the district party committee that hundreds of retired cadres had to present petitions or appear in person to request the standing committee of the provincial party committee resolve the problem and discipline the violators. In the past, most of the cadres in the internal affairs department were from Binh Son District, but why was there a serious loss of solidarity which was prolonged and irresolvable? The standing committee of the provincial party committee was forced to dissolve that department (it has since been reinstated). Why did the party organization of Tay Son District receive an anonymous letter from a party committee member slandering the secretary of the district party committee, and why did the party organization of Phu My District receive many letters from district cadres slandering the chairman of the district people's committee? Why, for many years now, have the retired middle-level and high-level cadres in Quang Ngai City and some districts in the northern part of the province persistently struggled by writing letters to, or meeting directly with, the key provincial leadership cadres to request them to

rectify negative acts on the part of some provincial leadership cadres from Quang Ngai? What is the true nature of the political slandering of a number of cadres. It is not a matter of "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai." Why has there occurred in many village party organizations such a serious loss of solidarity that factions have appeared which fight one another fiercely? Those things have clearly demonstrated that the "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai" matter is in fact a screen to hide the individualism of some cadres in positions of authority. The recent serious contradictions, which may be called fierce contradictions, which occurred in the Quy Nhon Commercial Service, Public Health Service, and General Hospital were not a result of cadres of the Binh Dinh and Quang Ngai factions fighting one another. In some provincial bureaus and sectors there have been instances of two leadership cadres, one from Quang Ngai and the other from Binh Dinh, not having solidarity, so people on the outside think that it is a matter of "Binh Dinh, Quang Ngai." But essentially that is not the case, for standing behind those negative elements there are "cronies," some of whom are from Binh Dinh and some of whom are from Quang Ngai. There are also some leadership cadres who have caused a loss of solidarity by abusing local sentiment and friendships to rally supporters to cover up for themselves or put up a resistance.

Clearly, the serious, prolonged loss of solidarity and the rise of factions in some provincial-level party organizations and organs have essentially resulted from individualism, mandarinism, coveting positions, local partialism, arbitrary paternalism, and a lack of democracy. With regard to some leadership cadres at all levels, "positionism," i.e. competition for position and authority (and once one has authority one must have special privileges), the lack of democracy, and suppression, and revenge, are the reasons for the opposing factions. In the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation, authority was synonymous with advance guard, exemplariness, and sacrifice, so there was only mutual love and assistance, with a spirit of comradeship and compatriotism, and there was never a loss of solidarity caused by competition for position and authority.

Only Strong Medicine Can Cure the Disease, Painful To Say

President Ho Chi Minh and the party resolutions often admonished us to make self-criticism and criticism a law of development. However, over a period of more than 10 years, during which time individualism has developed increasingly strongly, the party organizations have not done a good job of steeling, cultivating, and carrying out self-criticism and criticism. On the contrary, there has been a lack of truthfulness in struggle and principles regarding party life.

After it began to respond to the "Tasks That Must Be Carried Out Immediately" movement of comrade N.V.L., the struggle against negativism has become stronger and has attracted the participation of large

numbers of cadres and party members and the masses, but because there are different evaluation viewpoints, there has been delay in reaching conclusions about and dealing with the serious negative incidents, and in some instances they have been ignored. Therefore, the internal contradictions have become increasingly tense, including very sophisticated instances of forming factions to cover up, resist, or oppress. In a number of cases, even though the party committee has made a decision to impose discipline, some people still have resisted, in a factional manner, but have not been criticized, analyzed, or disciplined. Something that is noteworthy and regrettable is that even in the provincial party committee, especially in its standing committee, there has been a lack of true unanimity with regard to some matters.

At present, of the list of 30 to 40 serious negative incidents (drawn up by the functional organs and approved by the provincial party committee), the major negative cases that have been publicized by the media and resulted in the imposition of discipline can be counted on the fingers of one hand. An extreme example is the negative incident at the Quy Nhon general hospital, which has been publicized by the local and national media for more than a year but no action has been taken.

Experience has shown that in all localities and units, if the party committee members, especially the secretaries, vice secretaries, and chairmen of people's committees (or directors, deputy directors, or secretaries of party committees) truly unite, unite in struggle, without the situation of "not being what it appears," and maintain discipline, there will be good internal solidarity and there will be no factionalism. Furthermore, in view of the severe internal contradictions, which even give rise to factionalism, if the key leaders have solidarity, good moral quality, and pure motives, are stalwart, skilled, fair, and honest, are not partial or improper, and have good leadership style, problems will be resolved promptly, properly, thoroughly, and reasonably. On the contrary, if the people who head localities and units have individual motives, do not have pure moral qualities, or have a "yes man" attitude, the internal situation will become increasingly chaotic and complicated. The effective resolution of the serious loss of solidarity in the Mo Duc district committee was a lively and useful lesson. In the even that there are many different viewpoints in evaluating a matter or cadre, the best way to create unanimity is to organize dialogues and consider many different opinions, in order to find all essential relationships, on the basis of which to reach conclusions and impose discipline. Avoiding dialogues, and letting things drift, exacerbates the loss of solidarity and internal disorder.

On the basis of the actualities of life, it may be affirmed that bringing into play the central solidarity role of the key leadership cadres of each echelon, sector, locality, and unit, and ensuring truthfulness in struggling for internal construction are decisive factors in strengthening solidarity and resolving internal contradictions.

Another indispensable element is true openness and democracy in, and standardization of, the economic-social activities, as well as the cadre work.

An Urgent, Legitimate Demand

Perhaps the analysis in this newspaper article is not comprehensive, for the actual situation is very complicated. But it is true that for the sake of the revolution, the locality, and the entire nation, the provincial party committee must promptly bring the matter of internal solidarity before the conference of the provincial party committee (it should be a plenary conference) to discuss the situation, carry out self-criticism and criticism, and take steps to overcome the problem. I hope that the key leadership cadres of the province, and the districts, cities, municipalities, services, departments, sectors, and mass associations at the provincial level must bravely face the truth, speak clearly, tell the truth, not beat around the bush or be evasive, and clearly realize their responsibility.

I recommend that the central committee send high-ranking, truly objective leadership cadres to Nghia Binh to hold dialogues with the retired leadership cadres and also with a number of specialists, in order to understand the nature of the problem, reach correct conclusions regarding the reasons, clearly determine responsibility, and take steps to thoroughly resolve the problem.

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Director of Propaganda, Training Department Interviewed

42090261 Hanoi GIAO DUC LY LUAN in Vietnamese
No 81, Dec 87 pp 10-14

[Interview with Tran Trong Tan, Director of the Propaganda and Training Department of the Party Central Committee, by a GIAO DUC LY LUAN correspondent: "Arousing the Strength of Public Opinion To Resist Negativism"; date and place not given; first paragraph is GIAO DUC LY LUAN introduction]

[Text] Recently, GIAO DUC LY LUAN interviewed Tran Trong Tan, member of the Party Central Committee and Director of the Propaganda and Training Department of the Party Central Committee, on a number of issues in Directive 15 of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee: "Strengthening the leadership of the party with the purpose of better utilizing the press in the struggle against negativism." Below are the questions and answers.

Question: There are presently differing opinions on the theme of Directive 15. Would you further clarify these issues?

Answer: It is true there are differing opinions due to the different perceptions of the directive. Some people have stated that this directive is primarily for the press circles

and some have said it is primarily for party committee levels. Some even believe that 9 of the 10 articles in the directive are for the party committee echelon with only one speaking to the press.

Such an understanding is incomplete. Directive 15 of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee states clearly that its theme is to strengthen the leadership of the party aimed at better utilizing the press in the struggle against negativism. Concerning this theme, three points demand attention:

First, the directive states that strengthening the leadership of the party is not simply strengthening the leadership of party committee echelons. The party wishes to awaken a widespread movement of the worker masses, all classes of people engaged in manual and intellectual labor, to control newspaper pages in the struggle against negativism. The mission of the entire party is to strengthen the leadership of this movement. Specifically, the party must properly orient and arouse the movement, and point out deviations that must be avoided. Not only party committee echelons that publish a newspaper but all party committee echelons from the central to the basic level, party members in the ranks of the press, and all other party members must grasp this directive and assist the party leadership in the movement of free speech and freedom of the party member cadres and masses of the people in the struggle against negativism in the newspaper pages.

Precisely because of this, the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee decided to disseminate a directive all the way down to the party chapter and to publicly announce the entire document in the papers and on the radio for every citizen to understand.

Second, the directive states it is "aimed at better utilizing the press." This means that although recent press participation in resisting negativism had a number of deficiencies that need correcting, it was basically good and brought positive results in many aspects. When the newspapers contain articles specifically reporting negative incidents with clear names and addresses, some worried it was "blackening the system," "exposing dirty linen to the enemy," "revealing internal secrets," and even "watching for individuals with poor backgrounds to interfere with the newspaper to conduct sabotage," a repetition of the "humanism-literature" occurrence, an "influence of Maoist cultural revolution," etc. As we see however, the Secretariat directive has no such observation, has properly evaluated the effect of the press in the struggle against negativism during the recent past, and encourages the need for "better utilization." Recently, a fairly large number of newspapers and newspapermen were still bystanders. A number of critical newspaper articles have contained some inaccurate points. A majority of people in society have no concept of the right to use the press in the struggle against negativism. There are still not a few party leadership cadres in all echelons and sectors with no proper perception of the role of the press,

and without good press leadership and use. Not a few cadres in sectors with inspection, investigation, control and judicial functions have not properly coordinated in the disposition of incidents published by the press. Directive 15 has an opinion on the clear supervision of these issues.

Third, in the struggle against negativism at the present time, the directive clearly presents an objective aimed at implementing the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress on the campaign to purify and raise the combat strength of the party, purify and raise the management effectiveness of the state, and make social relations more wholesome. In this campaign, the press must present cases of a typical nature, incidents of deviant and degenerate cadres, and major speculators and black marketeers. The press must firmly grasp and not stray from this objective. After verifying an incident and ensuring its accuracy, the press must use its sharp writing style to arouse public opinion in a strong reaction to the level of anger, strong criticism, and demands for halting and prosecuting incidents within the objective noted above, and must urge functional agencies to examine the case disposition, and submit replies in the newspaper.

We must observe the issues presented in Directive 15 over a broader plane. This is an extremely important aspect in the matter of democratization and openness and a motive force stimulating the renovation process in accordance with the resolution of the Sixth Congress. It is an extremely important aspect in achieving the mechanism of the party leading, the people controlling and the state managing. It is an extremely important aspect in successfully achieving one of the rights of freedom and democracy of our system as set forth in the constitution, the right of freedom of speech.

Question: Do you have an opinion on the observation that since this directive, criticism in the newspapers seems to have partially wavered?

Answer: I have also heard a number of comrades make such an observation. The Propaganda and Training Department has mentioned this issue to the press departments and propaganda and training departments of provinces and cities, the party committees of agency blocs in the central government and to those responsible for specific examination and inspection to acquire an accurate assessment and evaluation and to find the correct causes in order to resolve them. I know that at the present time, many locations are in the process of developing Directive 15. Could it be possible that party committee echelons, officials of the press, editors and correspondents must concentrate on accepting the new supervision and reviewing recent press activity, and this has caused the wavering?

This situation, if it exists, must not last. Party committee echelons, individuals responsible for sectors with newspapers, and press officials must develop Directive 15 in

a more urgent manner and promptly formulate a program for each newspaper to participate in the struggle against negativism along a proper course and in a more effective manner as desired by the party and the people.

Question: What do you think about the opinion that because a number of incidents published in the newspaper receive no disposition and those that touch "big cadres" are choked off, members of the press dare not pursue the matter?

Answer: In my understanding, in a number of cases raised by the press falling within the disposition purview of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, the Secretariat has conducted a full investigation to arrive at a disposition conclusion. In cases with complex details, disposition takes a long time but no cases have been ignored.

The Secretariat of the Party Central Committee also reminds responsible agencies that they must quickly and promptly handle negative incidents, not only those discovered in the newspapers and on the radio but also through party, agency and organization activities within the scope of their responsibility. Actually, some locations have been slow. I think that even so, members of the press should not be afraid of pursuit but should actively push forward with the title of pen-bearing soldiers.

Question: In the southern part of the country, our colleagues say that a so-called "paper-radio-fear syndrome" is being handed down in public opinion. What do you think about this?

Answer: If it is true that corrupt individuals are unwilling to move forward and daring not to create disturbances because they are afraid, it is a good omen. However, I am also concerned that this evaluation is too excessive, don't you think? Or do some individuals fear newspapers and the radio because a number of published articles may be inaccurate and therefore unjustly "slander" them? If this situation exists, our press must more clearly indicate that it is highly responsible in correctly stating the truth and in ensuring accuracy in the press.

Question: Recently, the press does not seem to be publishing negative incidents among high-level cadres. Could it be that the press is not struggling as strongly as before?

Answer: I think that way of thinking is inaccurate. To see whether the struggle against negativism is strong or not, it is necessary to examine how actively the effective results have been developed and the negativism repelled. To achieve great results, it is necessary to concentrate on typical incidents, if possible the major ones and also those that are not so major. For example, the pilferage of goods for a black marketeer by a state store employee is of a typical nature. Public criticism and strict prosecution of this case will educate thousands of other state

store employees and create enthusiasm for tens of thousands of other people. The struggle is only effective when the publication of one incident moves hundreds and thousands of others engaged in similar incidents to dare not continue their negative behavior.

Besides the typical incidents, it is also necessary to publicize in the newspapers those involving degenerate and deviant cadres. Regarding these kinds of cadres, there is no longer a necessity to think whether they are high or low level because if they are deviant already, they are no longer revolutionaries. Only by bringing them before public opinion in coordination with strict disciplinary and legal disposition can other party and state agencies be purified.

Strong resistance to negativism is not simply conducted within party and state agencies but also by resisting major negative incidents in outside society, major tax evaders, fraudulent goods manufacturers, speculators and black marketeers. Our press has not yet emphasized the public condemnation of this group.

Whether the struggle against negativism in the press has wavered, in my opinion, must be examined in those aspects.

Question: In implementing the directive's requirements, newspapers must ensure honesty in nature and accuracy in details. There is an opinion that absolute and 100 percent accuracy in implementation can be considered the same as not being able to write. Please give us some additional opinions on this issue.

Answer: Yes, it is a difficult job but one that socialist newspapermen must strive to achieve. They must investigate and achieve full confirmation. They must strive wholeheartedly to ensure that their articles are of high accuracy in order to raise the confidence in the press of a majority of the cadres and people. In reality, 100 percent accuracy is difficult to ensure. Concerning this matter, the directive also states that when one knows criticism was inaccurate, a correction must be made and strict self-criticism conducted in the newspaper and on the radio. Newspaper writers are revolutionary soldiers. The party has always had the high requirement that revolutionaries do correct and good things for the revolution, and they are not permitted to make mistakes detrimental to the revolution. In realistic disposition however, when a shortcoming exists, the party requests strict self-criticism. This is satisfactory.

Question: Please explain further the issue of the press not being permitted to reveal the secrets of the party and state. What can be done to keep agencies, economic units and social organizations from temporarily imposing secrecy to obstruct the press from fulfilling its information function and exercising the right of information of the masses?

Answer: The requirement not to reveal party and state secrets is extremely important. The requirement for

achieving the information function of the press and the right of information of the masses is also extremely essential.

The problem is in differentiating between what must remain secret and what must be released for everyone's knowledge. This differentiation is determined by each specific period and changes in accordance with situation development.

There are regulations on maintaining the secrecy of organizations and state agencies and the newspapers all know them. We must now make additional deliberations on whether things that occurred during the war are still secret, and whether things that were secret several years ago are still secret or are different. In economic management at the present time, it is also necessary to examine what can be provided as information to the masses and what must be kept secret.

Therefore, the directive requires that national defense, public security, economic, diplomatic, etc. sectors re-examine the specific regulations on issues that were previously required to be kept secret and submit proposals on points to be corrected and supplemented to the Council of Ministers for a decision before being announced to the press for achievement.

When the press has a requirement, concerned agencies are responsible for supplying the necessary information. With this information, the reporter must select, deliberate, avoid things that reveal secrets, and bear the responsibility for using that information in the press. The press must be concerned about the requirement of providing information to the masses and must simultaneously properly comply with the regulations of the state on maintaining national secrecy. Both aspects must be given attention.

Question: The directive makes almost no direct mention of magazines. How will they participate in the struggle against negativism?

Answer: Directive 15 of the Secretariat mentions the press, that is newspapers (written, spoken and pictorial) and also magazines. To mention the press is to include magazines. Compared with newspapers, the role recently developed by magazines has not been clear but it has not been entirely silent. The magazines XAY DUNG DANG [PARTY CONSTRUCTION], PHAP CHE XA HOI CHU NGHIA [SOCIALIST LEGAL SYSTEM], and a number of others have published articles criticizing negative incidents and shortcomings in the party and state apparatus.

Here it is necessary to recognize the special strength of magazines. They can delve into the substance and depth of an occurrence or issue in order to assist in clarifying the causes of a negative situation, and ways and means of overcoming and eliminating the negativism. They assist in raising the theoretical perception of cadres, party members and the masses in order for them to think and

act correctly. A number of magazines have begun to change course and maintaining close contact with the requirements of living reality.

In my opinion, magazines must not only have comprehensive, general and primarily interpretive articles of a theoretical nature but also those that delve directly into an incident of a typical nature, profoundly analyze the causes and nature of an issue and extract vivid lessons for overall education. This would have no small effect.

Magazines must not simply speak in an acquiescent manner but must have widespread debate and exchange of opinions; not only resolving the theoretical problems but also maintaining close contact with the problems posed by actual practice.

Question: Would you give us a few words on the course of GIAO DUC LY LUAN magazine in implementing this directive.

Answer: GIAO DUC LY LUAN is a magazine of the Department of Propaganda and Training of the Party Central Committee and at the same time must reflect the voice of teachers in the party schools, research cadres and political theory instructors in mass organization and state schools, and individuals concerned with the study of political theory. It therefore must maintain close contact with the theoretical and practical issues of the nation.

In my opinion, the magazine must renovate its subject matter and methods, not only acquiescently publishing articles but including debate and discussion. Include theories and viewpoints and if problems arise that need clarification, include articles debating and criticizing the right and wrong, and presenting the magazine's opinion. Only in this manner will the magazine be appealing and its role and effect improve. Efforts must be made to allow many people to find in GIAO DUC LY LUAN magazine the answers to questions asked them on theory or viewpoints arising from many aspects of life and from the struggle against negativism in the party, state agencies and outside society.

To participate in the struggle against negativism, purification of the party and state apparatus, and efforts to make social agencies wholesome, GIAO DUC LY LUAN magazine, besides article of a general nature touching upon the theoretical and practical aspects of this struggle, could possibly publish articles criticizing negative and unwholesome occurrences in the party school system, among the political theory instructors, and in the solution of incidents occurring within the activities of party and state agencies, including party schools. We are not afraid of "exposing our dirty linen" provided that we speak accurately and criticize constructively. If we speak accurately, the effect will be good. Party school associates, instructors and students must send critical articles and matters requiring criticism to GIAO DUC LY LUAN magazine.

I hope you will be successful in your efforts.

7300

Nguyen Van Linh Addresses Press During Four Days of Meetings

42090237 Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese
18 Jun 88 pp 1, 5, 8

[Article by Le Dien: "The Party Opens the Way for the Press"]

[Text] Two years ago, we of the press started making innovations along Sixth Party Congress lines of going to the people as the source, and began the struggle against open shortcomings where they can be located. Five or six general editors were forced into early retirement or resignation. Many correspondents were threatened with "jungle law," were secretly arrested, and were beaten up. When gathering material for news articles, it was necessary, under our own regime, to use circuitous routes and arrange meeting places like when the party was operating clandestinely. "They are conducting a cultural revolution on the Chinese model. It is easy for these ghost soldiers to rise up, yet they are hard to repress." Deviant and degenerate persons distorted the truth and discredited honest members of the press with such barbs. The party had entrusted us with the task of taking pen and writing articles, so whatever the losses and hardship, those of us involved in information work and the press were always present in the forefront of life. We had no other ambition than the desire to reclaim the trust of the masses in the party and put the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress into effect in real life. Very significant results have been achieved, but progress is unsure and difficult, because the work done recently was very difficult.

For that very reason, we hoped for and looked forward to the day that General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh and the Secretariat were to work with journalists. There was also some fear that this meeting was for warnings and correction. But when we got to the conference, I saw a different working atmosphere—one that was honest, understanding, open, democratic. The comrades in the Secretariat paid careful attention to the opinions of the journalists, encouraging each person to frankly express his opinion toward innovating the press and to criticize openly. In a sincere, emotional voice, Nguyen Van Linh—permit me to refer to the comrades in the Secretariat in familiar, informal terms—said:

"This is the first time in my revolutionary life that I have the opportunity to meet with all you journalists. I am very happy to be expressing my opinions to you all, but I also want to hear yours. I hope that after the discussion I will have the time to express myself more fully."

"The press must carry on to the finish, not go half way; it must follow through to the very source. It must look straight at the truth, calling the good good and the bad bad. The press must search for causes. Why good? Why bad? Correct leadership requires that shortcomings be dealt with. The press must vigorously avoid falsehood. You aren't the only ones that are afraid—I shuddered, too, when I wrote the column 'Things That Must Be

Done Immediately.' There were many people that were not receptive to that article. It was lucky that the press supported me. Thank you all, far and near, who provided me support and encouragement."

I saw that Nguyen Van Linh spoke to journalists in the person of the highest leader in the party and at the same time with the feelings of a colleague, the journalist Nguyen Van Linh.

An old and experienced journalist, now in charge of ideology in the party, Dao Duy Tung always encouraged us to express our opinions and quickly grasped and correctly summarized matters brought up by the journalists.

Throughout the 4 days of work, Tran Quoc Huong, the secretary in charge of internal politics, was very attentive, asking further questions about anything he was still unclear about. In the last hour of the conference, he expressed some opinions that needed clarification regarding the relationship between press agencies and legal agencies, and suggested: "If you uncover any shortcomings in legal agencies, I propose that you go ahead and criticize it. The leadership of the internal politics sector will firmly resolve it."

In this atmosphere of honesty and openness, we journalists frankly expressed our grievances and thoughts on press work, emphasizing problems with party leadership of the press, with the policy on information, and with training and development of information and press personnel. These might be considered loyal words spoken by journalists to their beloved party. Within the confines of this article, let me touch on just a few highlights.

Looking Back at the Press Over the Past 2 Years

Hong Chuong, chairman of the Journalists Association, said: "For the past 2 years, especially since the Sixth Party Congress, there have been many changes in our press. Beginning with preparations for the party congress, in keeping with the instructions of the Central Committee, the press reflected the opinions of the people, contributing to the formation of the party line and policy. Criticism and self-criticism began receiving emphasis in the press. The press did not provide only one-way communication about decisions of the party and the state, but began to express the voice of the people.

The Sixth Party Congress signified a turning point in the our people's task of socialist revolution and socialist construction. Implementing the resolution of this party congress, the press made positive contributions toward innovations in the party. Characterized by a high degree of struggle, short, concise articles by Nguyen Van Linh in the column "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" in NHAN DAN set in motion the struggle against shortcomings in the press.

With the close and correct guidance of the party, the press exposed a number of shortcomings to public scrutiny. This had the effects of compelling responsible central and local agencies to investigate and resolve the issues and of mobilizing public opinion and strengthening the confidence of the masses in our party and state. Our press thrived on the struggle against shortcomings.

The issues raised by the press were generally true. Yet in a number of papers there were also some that were inaccurate; there were editorials that were deductive in nature and analyses of an exaggerated nature, lacking in care to weigh all aspects. There were also instances of overbearing journalism, of publishing false articles, and of failure to publish rebuttals written by persons who had been criticized by the paper. By and large, the motives of journalists in the struggle against shortcomings were untainted.

Nguyen Ngoc said: "The press activated the great power of public opinion to overwhelm shortcomings and contribute to the purification of society. This has been an innovative phenomenon of the press ever since the October Revolution to today. In the final consideration, the power of the press is the power of the people."

Raising Quantity of Information, Diversifying Information

In the present era, information has become a basic need of man, like food and drink. The people of many countries have vied with each other enter the words "*the right of the people to receive honest information*" in their constitutions. People have also begun to use the quantity of information supplied to the masses as a measure of the intellectual standards of the people. This is not something we are ignorant of. Yet why is our information poor, slow, not dynamic, not detailed?

Vo Nhu Lanh, deputy general editor of SAIGON GIAI PHONG said: "The reasons why our information is backward are:

"No small number of leadership cadres still wish to keep a monopoly on information, with the news dissemination committee providing it to this person and that as a favor.

"The feudal viewpoint that 'the people must be ordered, not informed' also still survives.

"We see three illnesses in journalists: rigidity of thinking, officiousness in style, and worn-out manners of expression."

Thai Duy, after talking about regulations and prohibitions that restrict journalists and limit information, provided a concrete example:

"No one has ever been as idle anywhere as a journalist covering our National Assembly. Sessions of the

National Assembly should actually be the busiest moments for journalists because of many meetings with and questioning and obtaining news from eminent representatives of the people throughout the land. Yet a journalist at the National Assembly has uninterrupted leisure. Information is disseminated by the Secretariat of the National Assembly, including reports printed in excerpts. One is not allowed to loiter around meeting rooms.

"Such a journalist certainly has leisure time, but he gradually becomes dull and worn out.

"I think two other things cause scarcity of information: mistakes, which involve the ideology of accomplishments, and false reports."

Dao Tung, the general director of the VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY, touched on the requirements for our party and state to have an improved information policy, to supplement information agencies, to innovate information media, and to integrate with modern information worldwide.

Ha Dang, general editor of NHAN DAN Newspaper, stated that to innovate a newspaper was first of all a matter of innovating the information system, an effect of the existence of a newspaper.

Pulling Weeds; Caring for Young Sprouts

In discussing the struggle against shortcomings in the press, the journalists expressed the unanimous opinion that this struggle is to be affirmed and suggested that the Secretariat lead the press in continuing the struggle; it would be dangerous and harmful to leave it half done.

Many instances of shortcomings raised by the press remain in fearful silence. SAIGON GIAI PHONG brought up 27 instances, all true, but only 6 have been satisfactorily resolved.

Dinh Van Nam, originally general editor of TIEN PHONG, clarified that the Ministry of Health criticized itself over the case of Le Minh Hanh in the paper and over broadcasts, but to date has done nothing by way of correction. With such actions, how can social discipline be maintained and the confidence of the masses secured? The young journalist Nguyen Thang (of the central television station) told of cooperation with newspapers in bringing the incident of Vuvalop [as printed] in Hanoi on the screen, and reported to the Secretariat that this incident had also slipped into fearful silence. More frightening is that some cadres implicated in this incident were not only publicly criticized, but received raises and were promoted.

Why are many struggles protracted or fall into fearful silence?

Ngoc Thach, general editor of DAI DOAN KET, said, "The Thanh Hoa incident went on for 18 months and

was resolved only when the Secretariat sent out an investigating body. The Dong Tien (Hai Hung) incident has dragged on for a year, and is still pending. The main reason for this is cover-ups by persons in local positions of authority. It is easy to understand that when the head man in a locality himself is prominent in a cover-up, it unfortunately passes from the Organ of Control, the public security forces, and the court to the youth group, the women's association, and the Fatherland Front, all not daring to express different attitudes; the case is stalled, paralyzed, and there are even people who come forth to repeat their opinion, etc."

There were also many opinions on propagandizing the new. One person said that because we had not yet correctly discovered the new, the new would be attractive only if it was truly new. Here is a matter of viewpoint that must be clarified: in the current situation of innovation in thinking, what are the new factors? What are the progressive models? Journalists realize that there is uncertainty about this problem. Without clarification, it will be very hard to introduce the new. One opinion is that the press has dedicated 70-80 percent of its news and articles to the new, the positive. The press should not be criticized for minimizing this matter which is treated little in society.

Because of these two important problems, Nguyen Van Linh said to the journalists, "Struggling against shortcomings is not smearing the regime black, but driving away shadows and letting in the light. Strip off the black and paint it red. That is struggling against shortcomings. The rice will grow well only if we pull weeds and eliminate diseases and pests."

"The press must enter life and support new factors. In writing about new factors, it must not just praise, but must analyze and explain the reasons why they must be done well. The press and sectors must cooperate in providing deep analyses and in developing new factors. To present only the good news is only to hawk one's wares. The press must search for causes, refine, and derive experience. The press is the school of dynamic action. The press is not only a tool of guidance and forum of the masses, but also has the function of a school."

"I hope all you comrades will look deeply into models, not only go about hawking wares, but stimulate, analyze, and guide each person to follow your lead. I believe each of you can do that. If it can do it, the press will not only educate the masses, but will even educate Nguyen Van Linh himself and educate the Secretariat and the Political Bureau."

Dialog, Debate in the Press

This is a new issue, an important issue of transition from a monolog-based press to a dialog-based press. For the very reason that this is new, it contains much uncertainty.

Xuan Cang, general editor of LAO DONG Newspaper, expressed the view that being a model for the people means that the press can announce separate opinions, even ones in opposition to opinions of the party, as long as they are chosen in a constructive spirit? This would be to utilize and stimulate the rich intelligence of the people, and turn the intelligence of the people into the intelligence of the party.

Tran Cong Man, general editor of the newspaper QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, said: "If debate is usually only over methods of implementation, why not debate right and wrong policies? Should that not include debates over matters of history—the Tet general offensive, for instance, while witnesses were still alive."

Nguyen Thanh Le, an old and experienced journalist, analyzed: "Our country is in the first phase of the transition period, not yet having established the socialist model. Building socialism is the creative task of the masses. Our economy has five components, each with different interests. For this very reason, debate is all the more necessary, including open debate in the press. Only with debate can we search for the right and clarify the problem."

Changing from one direction to two directions, from concealment to openness, from monolog to dialog—we feel that this is making information democratic, and the press is responding to the expectations of the people.

The Party with the Press

Only if the party makes innovations can the press make them. Our party is beginning to innovate thinking, innovate the economy, and innovate society. This is basically advantageous for innovating the press. But journalists also want the party to improve leadership of the press in order to enable the press to advance to a high level of the revolutionary task, in step with the times.

Tran Cong Man said: "The press is the voice of the party and at the same time the voice of the people. The press absolutely must have the leadership of the party. Yet I think that the press also must have an independent role if it is to be able to stimulate the creativity of journalists."

Hong Chuong said, "I agree with our Central Committee. Our party has considered the position of the press an important one. Yet this is not yet correct. The case of Comrade Ha Trong Hoa is an example. His mistakes were exposed by the press during preparations for the Sixth Party Congress. Yet the nationwide congress of the party, the party body with the highest authority, not anxious to take public opinion into account, appointed Comrade Hoa to the Central Committee of the party. From alternate member, through the Sixth Party Congress, he was appointed as a regular member of the Central Committee. That fact proves that the party does not listen carefully to the opinions of the people..."

"Our party and the state also do not attach due importance to the training of journalists. The university does not have a department of journalism. I suggest that the university should have a department of journalism for training correspondents. The Nguyen Ai Quoc Institute should have a department of journalism for training leadership cadres for the press. The Secretariat must also give the various party committee echelons, especially those of cities and provinces, a thorough grasp of the viewpoint of the party and of Marxism-Leninism on press work..."

Quang Dam stated that insufficient importance was attached to the press, which is a manifestation of the failure to attach importance to the role of revolutionary intellectuals. In its new period, the revolution's moving forces should be workers, farmers, and intellectuals.

Now the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee, the Journalists Association, and a number of municipal and provincial journalists associations will hold conferences on the above subjects. Through these conferences, the opinions of the press will be reflected to the Secretariat. In this scientific and democratic way, we hope our party will very soon have a resolution on innovating the press.

9830

'Things That Must Be Done Immediately' Campaign Reviewed

42090252 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
21 Jun 88 p 3

[Article by Le Huyen Thong: "What Has Resulted From More Than a Year of Carrying Out the 'Things That Must Be Done Immediately' Campaign?"]

[Text] More than a year ago, beginning on 25 May 1987, the newspaper NHAN DAN began to carry a column titled "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" by comrade N.V.L. To date—21 June—comrade N.V.L. has written 23 "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" columns, which have been publicized widely by the media to contribute—as the author emphasizes—to "restore order and social justice, and eliminate some of the serious obstacles on the nation's path of development."

With a spirit of "making the people the root," the author of the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" articles requests the sectors and echelons to look directly at the truth, practice openness and democracy, and concentrate on resolving problems brought up by the public "rapidly, accurately, and fully," while also paying attention to the very great political and social responsibility of the mass media organs and journalists to "Have an

upright will: love people who work correctly and well in order to praise them and hate people who do bad things, act improperly, and commit crimes in order to condemn crimes. The role of journalists is to shed pure light and push back and gradually eliminate the dark shadows."

Practically all of the sectors, provinces, and municipalities, beginning with the Lang Son provincial party committee, have issued specific directives and guidance on responding to the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign that are appropriate to the unit and locality. Many newspapers at the central and local levels have added new columns and are striving to make "each newspaper a forum for the strata of people." Responding to the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign has become an important content of the daily action programs of the localities. In view of the present renovation requirement, all sectors also have things that must be done immediately.

The Role of the Masses and the Strength of Public Opinion

In actuality, there have been few newspaper columns which have been responded to so rapidly by the many strata of people, cadres, party members, and members of the armed forces as the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" articles. Every day NHAN DAN receives hundreds of letters and articles from readers in Vietnam requesting the legal organs and media to clarify matters uncovered by the masses. In many places, retired cadres have organized discussions about newly arisen problems and have participated in supervising the implementation of the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign at the basic level. Especially, when the Political Bureau issued the resolution on purifying and increasing the combativeness of party organizations and the state apparatus, and making social relations wholesome, the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign became an urgent requirement closely with that major campaign. Clearly, that column has contributed to enabling readers to have closer ties with the mass media organs. After that, the role of the masses and the strength of public opinion, the strength of public opinion, and their close relationship and mutual effect, became increasingly clear.

Implementing Circular No 16 of the Secretariat and continuing to respond to the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign, the sectors and echelons have reviewed the past and present incidents. The Secretariat sent groups to investigate and reach conclusions about the negative incidents in Thanh Hoa, Minh Hai, Tay Ninh, and Cuu Long provinces and the Rubber General Department. Many places have concentrated their guidance on the investigating teams helping the party committees handle the major negative incidents about which the broad masses are concerned and bring them before public opinion. The Ministry of National Defense is concentrating on investigating, and resolutely disciplining, a number of leadership cadres at the Civil

Aviation General Department. The Ministry of Interior responded to the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign by holding training classes, with on-the-job training, along the lines of renovating thought, renovating the cadre organization work, and renovating work styles. The Ministry's leadership resolutely disciplined nearly 200 public security cadres and men for violations of discipline, including the collective leadership of the River Transportation Police Department. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry held judicial reviews and appeals to dispose of a number of negative incidents in the corporations and general corporations. The Quang Nam-Da Nang provincial party committee disposed of negative incidents in the Customs Service and the Ship Handling Corporation, and is considering the prosecution of a number of leadership cadres of the province's Export-Import Combine Corporation. Minh Hai Province decided to expel from the party and prosecute tens of leadership cadres of the provincial sectors who abused their authority and deliberately seriously violated economic management principles. Since the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" movement was launched a backlog of more than 200 incidents were exposed to public opinion. More than 200 news items and articles criticizing negative phenomena in all spheres were published in NHAN DAN during the past year. Eighty-five percent of those incidents were initially uncovered by the people. The masses complained about some incidents for a long time, but the leadership still maintained an attitude of "frightful silence." Not until the newspapers openly publicized them were they investigated.

Many negative incidents have been publicized in LAO DONG, DAI DOAN KET, TIEN PHONG, TUAN TIN TUC, TUAN TIN THANH NIEN, TUOI TRE, PHU NU, SAIGON GIAI PHONG, QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, RADIO VIETNAM, VIETNAM TELEVISION, ETC. The outstanding feature is that the masses have faith not only because they see that the law is strict toward offenders but also because in many instances the press has contributed to clearing innocent people, resolutely condemned the vengeful acts against people who criticize, and request the bringing to justice of people who take advantage of democracy to slander and distort the truth.

What Are the Obstacles?

Working with Thai Binh, Ha Nam Ninh, Ha Son Binh, Dong Nai, and Long An provinces, Ho Chi Minh City, and the leadership cadres of the Ministry of Interior, the Political General Department, the Supreme People's Court, the Central Control Committee, etc., we saw clearly that there is unity in evaluation—although to differing degrees—on the effectiveness of the struggle against negativism by responding to the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign. The leadership cadres in the internal affairs bloc have affirmed that public opinion plays a very important role and have opened the way for the functional organs to urgently

investigate, and reach accurate conclusions about, the negative incidents in order to dispose of them according to law. Many other comrades point to the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress, which emphasizes that "It is necessary to publicize in the media instances in which cadre party members, and even high-ranking cadres have committed serious errors with regard to moral quality." The actual situation after more than a year of implementing the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign has increasingly demonstrated that its direction is correct. The problem that has been posed is to review the situation and gain experience in order to continue to promote the struggle against negativism in the media, in conjunction with the implementation of the resolution on the major campaigns and Directive 15 of the Secretariat. But at present many people are still perplexed and worried because they see that there is still opposition from many directions. The truth is that in the course of carrying out the struggle against negativism there have been many incidents which the media have not investigated, or given careful consideration to the consequences, before making them public. There have been inaccuracies and baseless commentaries. Overcoming that deficiency and ensuring accuracy in criticism is a truly serious matter. But it should also be said that in addition to the many party committee members and sector leaders who support, and cooperate harmoniously with, the press, which is an instrument for struggling against negativism, in some places leadership is still hesitant, and even impedes the publicizing of negative incidents. In some localities, when the press criticizes the errors of the lower echelon, party committee members praise it for being "combative" and "bravely struggling to defend the truth," but when the press reports negative phenomena on the part of leadership the party committee members request the editors to review their "motives for criticism" or say that they should not "make public negative incidents related to leadership, for doing so will impede the progress of the mass movement." A number of local media editors have had to accept other assignments or retire early, or have been dismissed because they enthusiastically struggled against negativism and "dare" criticize provincial leadership.

Many readers have personally come to the party newspaper office or have written letters reflecting their concern over one of the obstacles faced by the present enterprise of renovation: the abuse of authority to restrict the press in its criticism of, struggle against, and opposition to negativism. The readers have posed the question of why many incidents reported by the media have not yet been investigated and brought to justice. On the basis of a study of 32 negative incidents made public in Ha Nam Ninh, Ha Son Binh, Dong Nai, Hau Giang, Nghia Binh, Ha Bac, Hai Hung, and Kien Giang provinces, and Ho Chi Minh City, it is clear that there are three main reasons why investigation, the reaching of conclusions, and disposition have been slow and prolonged.

First, in some cases the lower echelon is guilty of corruption and illegal livelihood, but the upper echelon

receives its share in the form of "gifts," so nothing is said. Those are cases involving the "interests" of the upper echelon.

Second, some negative cases are perpetrated by lower-echelon cadres who previously were evaluated as being "promising" and "progressive models." Such cases involve the "responsibility" of the upper echelon cadres because they had the "merit" of participating in "developing" those movement cadres.

Third, there is a "mix-up" in information because of bureaucratism and remoteness from the actual situation, or because the staff organ's report was not factual. Such instances usually occur in units with no internal solidarity, at a time when the upper-echelon lacks a sense of justice and stands to one side, or the functional organ (especially the investigation organs) works arbitrarily and is not close to the actual situation. In general, the negative cases which have been on the shelf for a long time are usually related to the upper-echelon leadership. In order to overcome that obstacle, it is necessary to oppose the attitude of indulgence and rightist "umbrellas," and especially to bring into play the exemplary role of leadership cadres.

Some Problems That Are Posed

As comrade N.V.L. stated, "The things that must be done immediately exist not only on the front of opposition to negativism, but in all other spheres of economic-social activity, in order to do a good job of meeting the goals set by the party and state." By carrying out the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign, the party committee of Ho Chi Minh City has learned the lesson that criticism of negativism must be accompanied by praise for the positive elements and the recapitulation of experience of the new models with regard to renovating the management mechanism at the basic level. The Thai Binh provincial party committee and the party organizations of the military regions, the armed forces branches, and a number of units of the People's Public Security forces regard setting "Good People, Good Deeds" examples as a content of the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign. It is very regrettable that the things that must be done immediately of that variety are still too few. A widespread phenomenon is the tendency for many localities and sectors to be concerned only with criticizing deficiencies and only discuss ways to struggle against negativism, without being concerned for being positive elements into play in the process of carrying out the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign.

"Things That Must Be Done Immediately" are a unity of speech and action, but are above all actions, because the true nature of the matter is "must be done immediately." An actual situation worthy of concern is that there is still a distance between speech and action, and words and acts do not match. Nothing loses the confidence of the masses more than saying but not acting, or saying much

but doing little, especially if that person is the cadre in charge. In guiding the implementation of the "Things That Must Be Done Immediately" campaign, a considerable number of leadership echelons still tend toward making vague appeals and empty exhortations, but do not point out the things that must be done immediately, how they should be done, and when they must be completed. A number of echelons have responded rapidly and are prepared to admit their minor deficiencies in order to avoid mention of their major errors and the complicated questions the masses are demanding must be brought before the public. Some complaints by citizens which have been publicized in the media have been regarded as having been resolved, but because they have not been disposed of fairly and thoroughly the masses are suspicious and dissatisfied. Overcoming those weaknesses and deficiencies is also something that "must be done immediately."

5616

DOC LAP Reports Cutback in Newspaper Circulation

[Editorial Report] A signed article in the 25 May Hanoi DOC LAP, the Vietnam Democratic Party newspaper in Vietnamese, reported that newspaper circulation in Vietnam has been cut by an average of 30 percent. The article, "Thoughts on the Role and Responsibilities of the Press and Journalists," by Hoang Phong, said that all newspapers have been cut by at least 10 percent and some by as much as 60 to 90 percent. Characterizing this as "an occurrence that is perhaps not normal," the author suggested that the government may have ordered the cutbacks in retaliation for the press's investigation of Party and government corruption during the ongoing "criticism campaign." The article noted that it is "really sad" to contrast this situation to that in the USSR, where the "glasnost" policy has caused newspaper and periodical circulation to increase dramatically. The article urged the government to investigate the cutbacks and explain what factors, other than increases in paper and printing costs, are contributing to them.

Incidents Reported by Press Said Ignored, Suppressed

42090260 Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese
25 Jun 88 pp 5, 8

[Article by Bui Dinh Nguyen: "Words and Actions"]

[Text] The resolution of the Sixth Congress asserted that, "The press is the voice of the party and simultaneously reflects the voice of the masses." Thanks to this, the people and cadres have a reliable location and place to express their thoughts, aspirations and proposals for the overall benefit of the country and their own legitimate interests. Precisely because it straightforwardly reflects the ideas of public opinion, the press has assisted leadership echelons in increasingly more clearly understand-

ing the true situation in many locations, and in promptly resolving a number of serious incidents. General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh has said, "Many negative incidents I have only learned about by reading the newspaper, and in some cases after publication had been completed. The Secretariat must meet to discuss the review and dismissal of a provincial party committee secretary and a member of the Party Central Committee." (An opinion expressed by Nguyen Van Linh at a conference of the Ho Chi Minh City party organization—see the newspaper TUOI TRE Ho Chi Minh City 2 February 1988).

This is an extremely pleasant sign of the "prosperity" of the press, increasingly respected by and instilling confidence in the readers so they can develop the collective ownership rights of a citizen.

Nevertheless, an examination of actual practice during the past year shows that the opinions of cadres and the people chosen for presentation in the press are only an initial result because they are only an enlightenment or proposal and occasionally nothing more than simply an expectation or request. The remainder are of a decisive significance in that, to the individual, agency or unit concerned about how to solve the problem, the conclusion is still dependent upon their attitudes of acceptance and judgement. In fact, recently and especially since the series of articles on "Things To Be Done Immediately" by Comrade N.V.L., not a few worthwhile articles have appeared in the various means of mass information on the opinions and practices of many readers from many different posts and sectors who have discovered and submitted extremely effective proposals and suggestions on many issues in our political, economic and social life. However, solution acceptance is still meager and slow and has not yet answered the expectations of the masses. According to investigative data gathered during the first quarter of 1987 by a number of newspapers such as NHAN DAN, QUAN DOI NHAN DAN, HANOI MOI and AN NINH THU DO and the Voice of Vietnam, Hanoi Broadcasting Station, etc., at the most, only 15 to 20 percent of the opinions presented in the newspapers and on the radio are regarded as important and are only partially performed while the remainder sink into silence and oblivion.

How can this be?

Recently, the newspaper NHAN DAN began a "Words and Actions" forum column along with the column entitled "National Forum" in the newspaper "DAI DOAN KET" in order for the people to participate in village and state affairs. This is increasingly pleasant because the legitimate voice of public opinion is being increasingly respected, the signs of democratization are being steadily developed, and the forum of the people is being increasingly expanded. However, something else worthy of attention and concern is whether up to 80 percent of the parties involved in the incidents reported by the press continue to remain silent as before. An

easily recognizable occurrence is that the more newspapers and radio openly present legitimate issues to the public, the more a situation of "earmuffs" and silent strategy appears as if no one knows anything, those speaking continue to speak and those acting continue to act, with only complaining and nothing else.

This is not counting the cases in which the interested parties rejected the issue, picked a quarrel or used their power and authority to mistreat those who straightforwardly dared to present the issue to the newspaper—such as the short story "Acquiring a Precious Thing" written by Phung Gia Loc, or the few lines in the paper on the charges made against those occupying housing in excess of standards—and also the countless complexities created by the accused taking advantage of their authority.

We hope that anyone truly for the people and the nation who is annoyed, smarting and disturbed over the present situation of the nation and the true condition of society will listen and lend a hand in true action and accompany his words with actions, words for others and he himself to act—not words for words alone. Action is primary with the best course only a few words and much action in specific, effective and efficient tasks to support the national welfare and the people's livelihood for a nation as wealthy and a people as strong as other nations near and far, and for the wholesomeness of our society.

Let us unmask, name and eliminate the ignorant, flattering and opportunistic instigators looking for a selfish life through the sweat off the back of the legitimate laborer. Let us cut down on bragging and boastful expressions that are like gongs and drums but unproductive and entirely meaningless. Eliminate cliched and tedious arguments, and reject hypocritic appearances attempting to deceive the world. Reduce the level of showy decoration, ostentatious, spectacular and noisy receptions and farewells, sumptuous and superabundant banquets, etc. for the sake of bribery, and the concealment of special privileges and rights, degeneracy and deviation, or internal ignorance and laziness.

In speaking to act, let us delve into the lives of ordinary presently active as well as retired manual and intellectual laborers in order to thoroughly understand how they live, what they study and how they work. Let us go with soldiers on the drill field and at the control points in order to sympathize with their lives and to use effective methods to resolve their problems. Let us go all the way into the mine shafts, enterprises and work sites in order to thoroughly understand the product quality and living and working conditions of the laborer. Let us go with the farmers working in the fields in fair weather or foul in order to know how much grain they have for eating and for reproduction after each crop. Let us go into the schools, from the kindergartens and primary schools to the colleges, in order to clearly understand how our children are studying to continue the undertakings of their forefathers, what is happy, sad, pleasant and difficult about the lives of the teachers, and why the aban-

donment of such a noble profession is increasing. Let us go all the way to the bus depots and docks and travel in vessel convoys and on trains to see how the transportation and communications sector is treating its passengers. Let us visit the sick in their hospital beds to learn how physicians look after the health of the people, how the lives of good doctors are, and whether we are still in a situation of "seeing a hospital and becoming injured". Let us give a little concern to our children who, because of hardship and poverty, must be separated from their fatherland and family to engage in cooperative labor with foreign countries, but who are taxed too heavily. And in the name of justice, maintenance of the truth, and respect for discipline and law, let us visit the prisons to check whether tyrants taking advantage of their authority have, regardless of human rights and democracy, arrested innocent citizens and unjustly imprisoned, maltreated and abused them as in the cases of Nguyen Van Sam in Dong Tien, Le Quang Dinh in Hue City, Nguyen Van To in Binh Thanh District of Ho Chi Minh City, the three female students in Thanh Hoa, the seven cadres and employees of the Hau Giang fresh water plant, etc. in order to clear them.

The slogan of "Everything for the happiness of the people" has already been voiced many times. Let us, by practical tasks, bring changes for that saying. Finally, it is hoped that leadership and command echelons will act in accordance with the statement of Nguyen Van Linh, "The people have spoken, the press has published and the party committee and state echelons must conduct strict examination—and solution."

7300

Role of DAI DOAN KET in Reaching Overseas Vietnamese

42090235 Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese
18 Jun 88 p 1

[Article by Hoang Bich Son, chairman of the Overseas Vietnamese Department of the CPV: "Great Unity with the Nation's Children Far from the Homeland"]

[Text] Presently, our Vietnamese compatriots are located in every part of the world, with no small number of them required, in order to make their living, to take citizenship in the country of residence and not to retain Vietnamese citizenship. Legally, they are not citizens of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, but morally they are Vietnamese people, because they will always carry within themselves a Vietnamese bloodline and a Vietnamese soul. It may be said that all our compatriots in foreign countries, whether they have Vietnamese citizenship or don't have Vietnamese citizenship, are children of the Vietnamese nation, and, taken as a whole, the Vietnamese people in foreign countries are a part of the Vietnamese nation. That is a given truth. The Vietnam Fatherland Front is the front of national unity, but only encompasses members of nationalities, social classes, political and religious organizations, etc., at home.

Regarding the national component in foreign countries, the Fatherland Front only comes via its newspaper, the DAI DOAN KET.

For many years, the DAI DOAN KET has carried the affectionate feelings of the nation to its children far away from the fatherland, bringing them pictures of home, of the land for which they will always be homesick. Many people look on the newspaper as an envoy of the nation's love, the bridge of affection bringing them in contact with their home town and their homeland. Of course, this sentimental bridge does not have enough spans, and only runs one way. This bridge must and can extend, and extend again and again until it reaches every spot where there are Vietnamese compatriots, and it should reflect the thoughts, emotions, aspirations, and also all aspects of life of our compatriots in other countries. Only then will the DAI DOAN KET help compatriots far away understand more about their home and homeland and make the front and compatriots in the country understand more about their compatriots in foreign countries in every corner of the world. This will make compatriots at home and compatriots in foreign countries feel closer to each other.

Compatriots in foreign countries have millions of relatives and friends here at home. These relatives and friends are the very reason why compatriots in foreign countries keep in contact with the homeland and with their national origins. In my opinion, the Fatherland Front, from the central echelon out to the local and grassroots levels, should be more attentive to their activities regarding relatives of compatriots in foreign countries, considering them members needing the attention of the front. And if that attentiveness is fully reflected in the DAI DOAN KET, it is certain to win the warm approval of compatriots in foreign counties and to increase the confidence of the compatriots in the national unity policy of our party and the state.

DAI DOAN KET enjoys the fondness of compatriots in foreign countries, but that fondness is still limited. If a suitable proportion of the newspaper is devoted to contents appropriate to the part of the nation remote from the fatherland, the trust and love of compatriots in foreign countries toward the paper are certain to increase greatly in depth as well as breadth. And the DAI DOAN KET will make no small contribution toward successfully gathering all Vietnamese together in the national bosom, with the aim of building a Vietnam that is prosperous, happy, and a hundred times more beautiful, as Chairman Ho wished.

9830

Da Lat Nuclear Researchers Voice Complaints
42090262 Hanoi LAO DONG in Vietnamese
2 Jun 88 p 2

[Article by Le Phu Khai: "Questions Needing Answering at Da Lat Nuclear Research Institute"]

[Text] Strategically, the National Atomic Energy Institute has a mission of research and cadre training in

preparation for the country's future atomic power sector. The Da Lat Nuclear Research Institute, the central unit of the nuclear sector, is located within the National Atomic Energy Institute. The output from the nuclear reactor located there is 500 kilowatts with a neutron stream of 10^{13} atoms per second per sq cm (double the initial output when constructed during the American-puppet period), a small-scale nuclear reactor used for research and radioactive isotope production, precisely the position and function stipulated by its equipment. Examined from many angles, the Da Lat Institute during the past few years has received adequate investment attention from the central government. Institute scientists and specialists, under extremely difficult conditions in their material lives and located in a position isolated and separated from the scientific and economic centers of the entire nation, have overcome objective circumstances to accomplish a great many outstanding achievements. They have produced a significant amount of radioactive isotopes extremely essential for production and life. They have connected the activities of this high-level scientific sector with production reality at the primary level; something that no one could anticipate. Unfortunately however, upper echelons have not created conditions for the scientific cadres working here to achieve the strategic long-term mission of the institute. This is most clearly expressed in the fact that instead of the Da Lat nuclear atomic reactor operation and control being the center of cadre and specialist investment, the nuclear energy sector invests in other locations! The ranks of cadres above college level coming to the reactor that should have been trained in years past are in reality zero! In the granting of degrees to scientific cadres throughout the nation during the past few years, the Da Lat Institute, an important research facility with the scope and requirements of international trade, was completely forgotten!

Regarding the atomic power sector, previous experience indicates that due to national secrecy in the manufacture of enriched raw material elements, the primary material of atomic reactors in other countries, the training of atomic power cadres for each country has had to be a task of primary consideration to that country. The Da Lat reactor is a precious asset. It is a location for training cadres in practices extremely essential to a nation very poor in the material facilities of the nuclear sector. Concerning investment for the reactor, valuable radioactive isotopes such as $99m\text{To}32\text{P}$ have not received synchronized investment, creating obstacles in achieving the long-term mission of the sector as noted above.

While accepting a long-term strategic mission without the proper level of concern, the nuclear sector also invested in a number of research projects without scientific basis and indistinct in economic significance, creating serious losses. One not so typical example was the investment in a scientific aid program worth \$170,000 to create a new strain of rice at the Da Lat Institute. Lam Dong Province is not a key rice area. After a period of aid acceptance, the program director, Master of Science Le Dac Lieu, returned to Ho Chi Minh City to accept

another program worth \$270,000, again with no results. Meanwhile, at his laboratory in Da Lat, all of the research equipment completely deteriorated, except for the radioactive source cobalt 60 (60 Co) which was all used in other projects! Also during that period, a "research project on the use of ionizing radiation to sterilize public health products" was put into use and test production was begun with scores of production facilities in Ho Chi Minh City applauding its clear economic and technical value but no investment was made by the nuclear sector! This method of gamma irradiation has been applied in industry for more than 5 years. More than 140 industrial radiation sources are operating in more than 40 countries. At the present time, Ho Chi Minh City annually has more than 100 million medicinal agent and drug product units such as implements for liquid and blood transfusion, operating gloves, contraceptive products, etc. requiring sterilization by the irradiation method which is more technically effective and less expensive than all other methods. Besides public health products, export agricultural and marine products in Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong River delta area also have an urgent need for sterilization that the irradiation method is entirely capable of answering. In Ho Chi Minh City, we listened directly to the Equipment Enterprise of the Ministry of Public Health, Pharmaceutical Enterprise 25, the Central Animal and Poultry Product Corporation, etc. wholeheartedly upholding the sterilization by irradiation method of this scientific project at the Da La Nuclear Research Institute. That being the case, for what reason did the National Energy Institute not support this project but conversely, obstructed its development along with many other projects clearly effective in production?

Finally, party development within the intellectual ranks at the Da Lat Nuclear Research Institute is abnormal. The examination and admission of scientific cadres at the institute into the party is too difficult. In some cases, the party team has conducted an admission examination with an absolutely high number of votes but the admission procedures have been deferred by the institute party committee for vague and covert reasons. Many intellectuals returning from a personal background in the western countries and presently working at the Da Lat Institute see the "fate" of a number of intellectuals who studied in the Soviet Union and are brought to thoughts of...sadness!

Could it be that the admission of a cadre or employee engaged in common labor when he has sufficient standards to enter the party is easier than the admission of a skilled specialist? Or are the standards for admitting an intellectual to the party higher than for others? Or is it because of some other unclear reason?

The questions posed above must be answered to keep chain reactions in the thoughts and feelings of scientific cadres of the nuclear sector from harming the interests of the nation. Neglect of the country's grey matter is a crime that must be resisted at the present time.

7300

ECONOMIC

Country's Ties With CEMA Reviewed

42090259 Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese
25 Jun 88 p 6

[Article by Nguyen Khac Vien: "Old Loyalty, New Ties"]

[Text] Ten years ago, in June 1978, I sadly stood watching large groups of Chinese making their way toward the border on the Hai Phong-Dam-Ha-Mong Cai road. China cut off its aid and all ties to us. Pol Pot stepped up his provocations along the southwestern border. Then I had the occasion to visit a number of European countries and witnessed a vast campaign of a psychological warfare nature to slander Vietnam. During that hot summer—in June 1978—few people paid attention to the news that Vietnam had become an official member of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA). Now, 10 years later, few people mention it, although they commemorate the 5th, 10th, and 20th anniversaries of many minor events, which continually make the headlines of our media. I've noted that during the past 10 years our press, unintentionally or intentionally, has told its readers practically nothing about CEMA, especially how our country's entry into CEMA has affected Vietnam's economic and social development.

Now and then the press reports that CEMA has met and that one or another of our dignitaries attended, or that this or that has happened between CEMA and Vietnam, but there is nothing specific with regard to data or the mechanism through which the countries work together. That superficial information only causes people to think that it is a matter of new wine in old bottles, that CEMA is only a new name, while the relationships between us and the fraternal countries, especially the Soviet Union, remain unchanged, and that we joined CEMA primarily to seek aid. The lack of specific information has long been a deficiency of our media, and that is not to mention such new stories as CEMA or even assistance from the Soviet Union, which has a history of more than 30 years. It never gives specific data or details. Now and then a commentary will only refer to the close relations, all-round cooperation, or great assistance, or a feature story will portray a sweaty Soviet technician working assiduously at a construction site. There is reference to the symbolism, but there are no details. As a result, when one learns about unfavorable details one easily forgets the symbolism.

One person said, "We use foreign exchange foolishly by buying Soviet machinery, which is not as good as capitalist machinery. Fortunately, I had learned some details (from experience, not from the newspapers or from such journals as NHAN DAN or CONG SAN) and could show him the following figures regarding trade between Vietnam and the Soviet Union (since 1985):

	Imports from USSR	Export to USSR
1985	922,000,000 rubles	277,000,000
1986	1,055,000,000	280,600,000
1987	1,120,000,000	333,000,000
1988 (estimated)	1,160,000,000	(Probably little more than 1987)

Thus we do not spend foreign exchange to buy Soviet goods, but every year incur a debt of 700-800 million rubles. That debt has accumulated over many years, so we have requested our friends to "sympathize" with us. If we had traded with Japan or the United States, would they have sympathized with us like that? With regard to oil and natural gas, some people say we suffer losses in dealing with the Soviet Union, which takes most of our oil and natural gas exports. I respond by citing figures or things I learned by "eavesdropping": the Soviet Union invested more than 2 billion rubles and we invested 200 million, i.e. one-tenth, and we "persuaded" the Soviet Union to concede to us all foreign exchange obtained from selling oil until 1990. I don't know whether or not the story I overheard is correct, but if our press would officially publish specific data our people would be better educated. In daily contacts between our people and Soviet organs and cadres, disagreements with regard to details, and at such times one forgets the big picture. But if we know that in trading, in constructing the Hoa Binh, Tri An, and Pha Lai projects, etc., the Soviet Union has given us millions and billions, when comparing its aid with that of the capitalist countries, we will not fail to see the big picture because of details.

In commemorating the 10th anniversary of our country's entry into CEMA, what I want more than anything is that our media and publications publish many specific figures and details regarding the relationship between our country and the fraternal countries. And I hope that in the party and in the state organs there will be truly detailed study campaigns to explain CEMA, how we work with CEMA, how we borrow bank capital, and the law regarding joint ventures. I know—also from eavesdropping—that the old ties between our country and the fraternal countries, especially the Soviet Union, have not changed, but now that we have joined CEMA our way of livelihood will change completely. But in that new relationship we, i.e., the enterprises, localities, and organs, including the high-ranking cadres, are very inexperienced and confused. The Soviet Union also still lacks experience in working with us in the new style. I very much hope that in the coming party chapter meetings there will be study about CEMA.

5616

National Banking System Changes Operating Mode

42090228A Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
1 Jul 88 pp 1, 4

[Article: "On 1 July the National Banking System Will Change Over to Operating in Accordance With Economic Accounting and Socialist Commerce"]

[Text] Beginning on 1 July 1988 the entire national banking system will change over to operating in accor-

dance with economic accounting and socialist commerce. That innovation is intended to attain the goals of clearly delineating the management function of the state and the commercial function of the bank, have true commerce in currency, credit, and bank services, and positively contribute to fighting inflation. That will end the long-standing confusion between the financial function and banking function. In banking activities, there will be an end to the confusion between managing the monetary and credit policies and monetary and credit commerce; the mechanical investment of credit, without taking into consideration specific capabilities and effectiveness, will be eliminated; and there will be an advance toward overcoming subsidies in the form of credit. The commercial banks must be truly concerned with sources of capital. In addition to capital that is supplied initially, it is necessary to actively mobilize all sources of monetary capital in society in order to expand lending in accordance with the economic programs without relying on the printing of money, as in the past.

With regard to the organizational model, beginning today the following banks will officially begin to operate in accordance with functions that have been specifically stipulated: the state banking system, with branches at the levels of provinces, municipalities, and special zones directly under the central echelon; and the system of specialized (agricultural development, industrial-commercial, investment and construction, and foreign trade) banks.

The State Bank is the staff of the Council of Ministers with regard to the monetary and credit policies. It fulfills the state's management function regarding money and credit, settlements, foreign exchange, precious metals, organizes the execution of budgetary funds, oversees the activities of the specialized banks, and regulates the circulation of money.

The specialized banks are not organized mechanically according to administrative borders, but are adapted to the actual economic situation of each place. A specialized bank may serve customers in other economic sectors. All provinces which directly import and export have foreign trade banks. Many provinces will no longer have investment and construction banks. Their work will be assumed by agricultural development banks or industrial-commercial banks.

In relations with the economic organizations, not all units are the bank's responsibility. The bank must treat them equally, serve them well, be trustworthy, skillful, and flexible in mobilizing capital in order to expand credit activity, and refuse loans to units which do not operate efficiently and are accustomed to subsidies. The autonomy of the economic organizations and depositors in commerce and in selecting banks with which to do business must be assured. All violations in economic relations on the part of banks or customers must be treated equally. On those bases, progress must be made toward achieving an alliance between the banks and the

economic organizations. The units may contribute shares and participate with the banks in monetary management, and the banks may hold shares of the production and commercial units. That renovation is an objective requirement whose time has come in economic-social life, and is also the result of a process of actively implementing the party's resolutions.

On 28 June a ceremony was held in Hanoi to inaugurate the specialized banks in the municipality. Comrade Nguyen Thanh Binh, a member of the Political Bureau and secretary of the Municipal Party Committee, participated in the ceremony.

Hanoi's banking system includes the municipal state bank, the headquarters of which are at 10 Le Lai Street; the Municipal Industrial-Commercial Bank, at 10 Le Lai Street, which has 7 branches in the 4 inner-city wards and in Gia Lam District; the Agricultural Development Bank, at Vinh Tuy, which has 12 branches in the districts and cities and a business center in the city; the Municipal Foreign Trade Bank, the headquarters of which are at 30 Ngo Thi Nham Street, and the Hanoi Investment and Construction Bank at 4B Le Thanh Ton Street. The system of savings accounts has been integrated into the industrial-commercial and agricultural development banks. At the same time, the banking sector has actively guided and assisted the credit cooperatives so that they can act as "village banks."

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Savings Account Devaluation Policy Brings Complaints, Comments

Banks Devalue Personal Accounts
42090249 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
29 May 88 p 1

[Article by Bui Van Phuc: "Not Until Hell Freezes Over..."]

[Text] The crops harvested in 1983 in the rural areas of Haiphong were abundant enough to leave farmers with some savings. For that reason Mr Nguyen Van Phu, 62, a member of production unit No 10 of Kien Trung Hamlet, Hong Thai Village in An Hai District, was able to sell a ton of paddy to the state at the agreed price of 8.5 dong per kg and thus to collect 8,500 dong.

Because his family was not really in need of that sum of money, which would not be enough to build a house with, Mr Phu discussed the matter with all members of his family and arrived at this decision: They sold their hogs, chickens, geese, and ducks to add to what they had saved and got a total of 10,000 dong which they deposited in the savings fund.

Mr Phu often explained to his wife and children that putting money in the bank would give them "peace of mind" because it would not only help the country and

benefit the family but also relieve them from worries about theft or wasteful spending.

But life always is full of unexpected things.

In September 1985, following the currency exchange order, Mr Phu's savings were "by authorization" reduced by 10 times. The bank officials "carefully" put on the balance column of Mr Phu's savings book the amount of more than 1,000 dong (because of the interest that was computed in accordance with the rate in the year he deposited the money).

That happening made Mr Phu feel very disappointed and reluctant to even look at his savings, but he still convinced himself that the state would never make him suffer from any losses.

Then came the preharvest lean period of "expensive paddy and scarce rice" of late during which, because of the pressure of his situation, Mr Phu withdrew the savings in order to cover some family spending. The bank officials warmly greeted him and paid him the balance of his account after having correctly computed interest on it.

All in all, both principal and interest let Mr Phu "get paid" 4,600 dong, which he "enthusiastically" brought to the market to buy ... more than 10 kilograms of paddy.

One would feel bad just to think about the scene in 1983 in which Mr Phu had to be assisted by his family, brothers, and relatives in going back and forth and carrying by improved carts 1,000 kilograms of paddy to the storehouse to sell and that of today in which he carried home just 10 kilograms of paddy in a single basket.

Not only Mr Phu's family but many other families of well-off farmers, of course, were in the same situation (some of them sold 3, 8, and 10 tons), for they also had "eagerly" put money in the savings fund.

We do not know what the bank leadership has been thinking about this situation, but very many farmers in Haiphong have been lamenting, "If they still follow that pattern, to be truthful with you, we will never save, 'not until hell freezes over!'"

Editor's note: This is a serious matter that is being raised for the state bank to deal with. Mr Phu's problem is not a private matter in the rural areas of Haiphong. This is a common problem for all localities, for all those who have put money in savings accounts all over the country. Bank officials should take a close look to see who are the people who have deposited savings money. Is it true that most of them are workers, farmers, state cadres and civil servants, and even retired people? If we understand that the losses that have been inflicted upon them are a sort of seizure, what do you think about it? The difficulties that in recent years resulted from price fluctuations and

currency devaluation have been obvious. But in this case, has the bank thought about a policy to provide savings depositors with insurance? It is time to propose a new policy to ensure the interests of both savings depositors and the state. Instead of making people say out of fear that they will not save money, "not until hell freezes over," the bank should attract more and more people toward putting money in savings accounts by adopting a policy that strongly encourages them to do so and by showing an attitude of full responsibility toward the people.

Change of Policy Urged

42090249 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
31 May 88 p 3

[Article by Nguyen An, of Quynh Luu, Nghe Tinh Province in column "Readers' Opinion": "It Is Necessary To Change the Policy on Savings Accounts"]

[Text] At the present time, although in my native village there is a shortage of grain and many families are encountering difficulties in their daily life, quite a few people still have a lot of money. Being farmers, they are eager to till the land and work very hard all day long to produce paddy and potato. They do not do any trading. Many families do want to put money in the savings fund in order to benefit both the state and themselves. However, like my own family, what they are worrying about is the fact that the currency value has been going down and they are afraid that "interest cannot beat losses" as their past savings deposits, including the ones made after the change of currency, have proved.

We now suggest that the Council of Ministers and the state bank think of some effective way to ensure good protection of the interests of savers in connection with their long- and short-term savings so that the majority of the people could have peace of mind and confidence as they try to earn more money, to limit spending, and to put any excess money in the savings fund.

NHAN DAN Readers' Responses

42090249 Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese
15 Jun 88 p 2

[Article: "Responses to the Article, 'Not Until Hell Freezes Over'"]

[Text] On 29 May 1988, NHAN DAN printed an article entitled, "Not Until Hell Freezes Over," by Bui Van Phuc of Haiphong on putting money in savings accounts, which was followed by an editor's note. Since then its editor has received a rather large number of letters from readers dealing with the same subject and suggesting various measures to improve the task of urging people to deposit money in savings accounts so as to avoid the situation in which they could say no, "not until hell freezes over...."

The Bank Also Bears Losses

Kim Dung, a reader in Vinh Phu Province, wrote: "As I read the article, 'Not Until Hell Freezes Over,' printed on the first page of the NHAN DAN issue of Sunday, 29 May 1988, I was extremely moved. The organ where I work, as well as the collective workers' quarters where I live, and members of families like my family, to a certain extent, all have made savings and have suffered from the same losses as those of Nguyen Van Phu, whose case was mentioned in the article. Right after the article had appeared, many questions were raised for a common debate: Who would benefit the most from business and credit? Is there any way to avoid this situation at all?

"It is obvious that the bank cannot avoid bearing responsibility for the losses of savers. However, with its function, the bank has the task of getting money from people and lending this money to other people; the faster this cycle is made to repeat itself, the greater the bank's achievement will be. In this case, in the capacity of lender, it bears losses nearly as great as those of savers. What we need to emphasize here is the fact that the bank is the state's credit organ, instead of an individual like a cadre or a civil servant, or a branch of another bank. Let us cite a few examples. A production installation, due to the needs for greater investment and expansion of production of goods for export, got a loan of 40 million dong from the bank in the last quarter of last year. At that time, with 37.5 grams of gold costing 400,000 dong and a ton of rice, 300,000 dong, that loan could have bought 100 taels of gold or more than 133 tons of rice. But in April 1988, this production installation paid back to the bank nearly 60 million dong of both principal and interest (at the interest rate of 8 percent). At the time the loan was paid, the price of a tael of gold was 1.8 million dong and of a ton of rice, 700,000 dong. The sum of money paid to the bank, with calculations based on those prices, could have bought only 33 taels of gold or more than 85 tons of rice. Thus in only half a year, if the price of gold or rice had been used as a standard, the bank would have lost 67 taels of gold or 48 tons of rice. We do not mention here the accounting of false interest which the production installation should have posted in its reports.

"Some time ago a friend of mine and his family borrowed from the bank 40,000 dong to buy building materials. With that money and at time it was obtained, it was enough for them to buy raw materials and materials to build three brick houses, with foundations made of reinforced concrete. Early this year when the loan was paid off, the sum of principal and interest was not enough to buy 2 tons of cement at high price. We can mention the cases of thousands of cooperative teams, private production households, and families of cadres and workers having greatly benefited from borrowing money from the bank."

Changing Interest Rate and Loan Term

Nguyen Duy Tu, a reader in Hanoi, wrote as follows in his letter: "The author, Bui Van Phuc, and the newspaper

'have looked straight into the truth we are living with,' something significant for our daily life, and have raised a real question, which would reinforce the confidence in the party, a thousand times more effectively than the empty words could, if it were correctly resolved. The newspaper was right when it said, 'It is time to propose a new policy to ensure the interests of both savings depositors and the state.' I was moved when I read and reread what the newspaper said, and showed it to other people for them to read, because I saw in it the enlightenment of a simple but wonderful base: The party comes to the people and seeks to understand what they think about.

"To find answers to the matters that have been raised, I believe the officials of the state bank have a level of intelligence higher than the one that has been approved for Ho Chi Minh City's Industrial and Commercial Bank. Is it true that our bank officials do have the mental capacity to handle these matters but have been prevented from acting because of some mysterious things? Let me bring up an example of the things we should probably adopt:

"One, the interest rate and loan term should be changed: There should be not only the 5-year term but also 2-year, 4-year, and 6-year (to go along with the 5-year plan) terms. Interest rates should be based on the principle of paying higher rates to larger deposits being kept longer in savings accounts. In addition to the basic rate, there should be bonus interest. Interest rates should not be fixed but should be based on current prices and computed and made public once every 3 months.

"Two, for every dong deposited the bank should guarantee paying exactly a dong at time of withdrawal. Suppose there were a currency-change order, the bank still would have to protect the interests of depositors. Because the relationship between the bank and the latter is one with customers, to ensure withdrawals would only quickly force the bank to really do business in money. As to the state, it has two choices:

"One, it accepts the situation as it is now and then goes more deeply into a stalemate (the state keeps printing more money and keeps lacking cash). Two, if it adopts the above-mentioned policy and then a change of currency turns out to be necessary, it must act to maintain a balance; and if the policy were changed in the near future, the people who have money and who no longer say, 'Not until hell freezes over,' would feel safe to deposit money in the bank, which means cash would again flow into the state fund, the state would save money from printing fewer banknotes, and the people would spend less on buying goods to keep as reserve and buying gold to protect the value of their money, and thus avoid the feeling of 'being robbed.'

"To sum it up, I wonder whether we should do as follows (I use the word, should, because I feel that, as an individual, I do not have the parameters necessary to check my own thinking, hence the suggestions):

"a. To extend the terms to include 2-, 4-, and 6-year terms.

"b. To set different interest rates for different terms, for instance 7 percent for 2-year, 14 percent 4-year, and 23 percent 6-year term.

"Interest rates are not fixed but vary with market prices and are set every 3 months.

"Bonus interests are awarded to deposit balances amounting to 200,000 dong and more, for instance 2 percent more for balances of 400,000 dong; 4 percent, 800,000 dong; 5 percent, 1 million dong; and additional 5 percent for every 1 million beyond the first million dong."

Computing With Prices-Related Decrease Index

An Tam, a reader in Nghe Tinh Province, wrote: "Mr Nguyen Van Phu's losses of savings as his case was mentioned in the party newspaper could be explained away as a result of inflation in the economy, fast increases of prices, and continued decrease of purchasing power. But there is no reason for the state, and more directly the banking sector, to let the people who have enthusiastically put money in savings accounts suffer from unnecessary losses.

"We heard very honest statements made by many such depositors. They explained that they had been aware of other ways to maintain the value of the money they temporarily would not need, such as buying goods, buying gold and putting it away, or doing some sort of business to let 'main dividends yield secondary dividends.' And it was their confidence in the state and the bank that made them put the money they would not yet need in the savings fund, for they believed there should be a policy that would ensure the value of their money.

"Although interest rates currently granted savings deposits are high, they cannot compensate for losses resulting from the fast increases of prices and the continued decrease of purchasing power. The state should in this case adopt appropriate policies. In our opinion, it is not feasible to ensure the value of deposited money with gold or paddy as some people have suggested because prices of gold and paddy do fluctuate and cannot be 'standards' for relative stability. May we suggest that every 6 months or a year the state sets a kind of price-related decrease index to be used to compute the value of depositors' money so as to maintain and ensure its value? Only then will people have peace of mind and put their money in the socialist savings fund; we thus can limit the situation in which people would use the money they saved to buy goods, which they would not use right away, and consequently to further disrupt the market and prices.

"We also want to add this: The bank should openly announce to the public the things that should be known about withdrawing savings money. I had a neighbor who

recently withdrew all of his 50,000 dong in order to cover some family spending and closed his account only to realize later that if he kept the account even with just a dong or two in it, in the future when the state would adopt the policy of ensuring the value of savings he still would be able to collect a sum of money computed for the amount he had withdrawn. This family regretted that it had closed the account and complained that the bank had been excessively authoritarian by not letting that information be known more widely."

Let Us Do As Ho Chi Minh City Has Done

A letter from Cao Thanh Kiem of Ho Chi Minh City had this to say: "Recently the Ho Chi Minh City Industrial and Commercial Bank announced dividing the time of deposits remaining in savings accounts into short periods for the purpose of awarding interest rates higher than the ones set by the state: nearly 7 percent per month for an average time of 3 months; more than 8 percent, 6 months; and 12.5 percent, 12 months."

Cao Thanh Kiem made this suggestion: "While we wait for a total and better policy, we think that the state, as an immediate step, should tell the provinces to do as Ho Chi Minh City has done and make things even better by temporarily putting an end to the forms of long-term savings, savings based on coupons setting the rate of bonus cycle, and savings based on accumulated dividends, which are all too complicated and inconvenient, and in their place apply the following kinds of savings:

Term of savings	Percentage of interest rate (compared to principal) withdrawable at maturity
Deposit with monthly withdrawal of dividend	7 percent (In case of need depositors can withdraw both dividend and principal)
Deposit for 3-month maturity	25 percent
Deposit for 6-month maturity	60 percent
Deposit for 12-month maturity	150 percent

"As for deposits made by elderly people to the longevity protection fund, they should receive special treatment with dividend computed on the basis of average monthly excess amounts and merged with principal, with interest rate being 12 percent per month.

"Naturally, the above-mentioned tendency to improve and raise interest rates (while the prices-related decrease of value takes place quickly) must go hand in hand with fully using the capital obtained from depositors to issue loans for development of the family-based, private, and individual economies (in accordance with the new party policy) and for unexpected needs at comparable interest rates."

To have a solution for the problem of savings deposits while prices go up quickly and the currency loses its value, and to ensure the interests of both depositors and the state is a task that is not simple and actually is very complicated. But this is not a reason for delaying our

action. This truly is a serious matter for our state, in which there is the great responsibility of the banking sector. In our opinion, the above-mentioned ideas that have come from our readers need to be considered.

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Hai Phong Industrialists Air Complaints 42090258 Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese 25 Jun 88 pp 1, 3

[Article by Minh Tuan: "Hai Phong Industrialists Speak Out: Why Is There the Phenomenon of Hesitancy?"]

[Text] Recently the state promulgated Decree No 27/HDBT, which was intended to further develop the individual economy and the family economy. But very few private economic installations have appeared. What is the reason, what is the hang-up? The businessmen are afraid they will be accused of being "neo bourgeoisie" or that the specific policies still hold back production. On 30 May 1988 the Fatherland Front Committee of Hai Phong, clearly manifesting the role and mission of the Fatherland Front, the largest political-social organization, which serves as the voice of all strata of people and is the bridge connecting the party and state with all strata of people, organized a discussion between a number of well-known industrialists in Hai Phong and representatives of the municipal departments and sectors. Comrade Le Toan, chairman of the municipal Fatherland Front Committee, presided over the meeting. Comrade Le Danh Xuong, a member of the party central committee, participated and expressed opinions.

Vu Huy Trinh made the opening remarks. This year Trinh is 70 years old. Prior to 1954 he founded a textile mill and an enterprise producing bicycle tires, had sales agencies in five provinces, and exported to foreign countries. He had stores in Hanoi, Hai Phong, and Paris, set up a corporation to export and import via Hong Kong, set up the first two rush mat weaving factories in Hai Phong, and set up a factory to produce weapons for the army. During the transformation process the above-mentioned property and enterprises were nationalized or collectivized and he became an employee of a state corporation. Trinh said:

"When I retired, and saw that the state was encouraging the family economy, I made four looms which were highly productive and produced attractive products. I bought two additional elastic looms and intended to make more of them. But my plans gradually faded away. At present I only make cakes to improve my living standard. During the transformation I was classified as a bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie were bad, were exploiters, and were covered with 'filth and blood.' My children also had a complex because their records listed their father as a bourgeoisie. Today, many people, including us, are still perplexed: the state appeals for the five

economic components to participate in production and commerce, but later will we be subject to transformation again? Many people are hesitant and do not yet dare invest capital. Even my children dissuade me: no matter what you do, you'll bring misfortune on yourself!"

Vu Van Ngoan, 77 years old, prior to 1954 was the owner of a private transportation company and had good vocational skills and business acumen, which won him the respect of the industrialists, businessmen, landlords, and even the French and Japanese colonialists:

"I'm old now," he said, "and no longer want to get rich. But now the state has an openness policy and I want to do my part. I have six children and several grandchildren abroad. If I ask them to send money they will, and contribute capital so that I can organize production and commerce. But in fact my situation is like that of Trinh. The word 'bourgeoisie' causes us to hesitate. If the state truly has an openness policy, can it return to us part of the capital and property which were nationalized? I hope that those in attendance here are sympathetic and do not think that we are bourgeoisie who want to make a come-back. You comrades have allowed an entire legacy—warehouses, workshops, machinery, and transportation facilities—to lose money and then rust and fall apart. We regret that very much. Factories must be run by people who truly own them. Although we are old and weak, we are still very 'itchy.' Our intention is to put money in circulation. We still want to get rich. Is it not proper to get rich honestly for the country and for ourselves?"

After spending some time in jail because he committed some violations, Mr Bui Xuan Hai returned to the city and, along with some friends, contributed shares to produce porcelain and earthenware for domestic consumption and export. Mr Hai was chairman of the management council. After 68 days, beginning on 8 March 1988, when work began on construction on a vacant lot rented from the city, his enterprise had completed an entire system of 3,000 square meters of workshops and showrooms, and had trained 750 artists and pottery workers. It intends to have more than 1,500 workers by 1989.

It may be regarded as the largest private enterprise in our country at present. At first the entire material plant had a value of 300 taels of gold, most of which was obtained by selling shares. Mr Hai said, "We are not afraid of lacking capital. In Hai Phong we can mobilize thousands of taels of gold, and in Ho Chi Minh City and the southern provinces we can mobilize even more. The problem is confidence. If the state can eliminate our apprehension regarding transformation and our feeling that we are being 'fattened up for slaughter,' the economic components and strata of people with ability and capital will boldly invest in production. The investment law and decrees 217, 27, and 28 of the Council of Ministers have been promulgated, but no guidance documents have been issued by the ministries and sectors, and those specific documents are the most important. Thus we are sticking our necks out and have no guarantees. At any

time the financial and banking sectors may question us about one thing or another, about our sources of capital, our tax rates, or the employment of workers. Our enterprise has been formed, but the comrades still will not give us permission to operate. If we do not have official permission, how can we operate and do business?"

Many people enthusiastically contributed opinions about the mechanisms and policies. Mrs Nguyen Thi Nho, who raises brine shrimp and fish in Hai Phong, is known to everyone. She rented 452 hectares of brackish marshland in An Hai District and built a surrounding embankment in order to raise shrimp and fish. She sold all personal possessions and borrowed capital from the Hai Phong Export Aquatic Products Processing Enterprise, mobilized share capital, etc., to invest in making embankments and sluices and hiring workers. During the recent season Mrs Nho harvested nearly 10 tons of shrimp and fish for domestic consumption and export. She said, "I recommend that the city create conditions for me to earn a living without worrying. The state enterprise could not make a profit in these fields. We rented the land and were successful, so they demanded our output. The district forced us to sell all of the fish and shrimp to it, and would not allow us to sell to the city or export. Are the city and the district two different countries? Is the head of the district a king? I rent the land, and make rent payments and pay taxes honestly, so the remaining output belongs to me, and I have the right to sell to anyone I want. First of all, I must turn over some of the products to the organization from which I borrowed the capital: the Hai Phong Export Aquatic Products Processing Enterprise. But the district gives us a hard time. It makes demands all the time, calls me in for questioning, threatens to take back the fields and ponds, refuses to sign papers so that I can borrow money from the bank, etc. I enrich the nation but am regarded as a criminal. The secretary of the municipal party committee is present today. I recommend that he intervene to assist me."

Mr Can is from Tien Lang and specializes in processing and selling wood products. His goods are produced to fill orders. He caters to his customers' desires, his prices are lower than elsewhere, and his goods are high-quality, attractive, durable, and economize on wood. He recommended that the state create good conditions for the skilled craftsmen and artists to pass their trades on to their children, grandchildren, and other craftsmen, and recommended that the state lower taxes.

At the meeting, the representatives of the financial and banking sectors were very perplexed and did not reply or respond to the problems and requests of the industrialists, and did not have a specific guidance policy, although the party's stand is very clear: "We will report and seek the opinion of the upper echelon." That was the very vague promise made by those comrades.

Concluding the conference, Comrade Le Danh Xuong, a member of the party central committee and secretary of the Hai Phong municipal party committee, expressed his

opinions. He thanked the Fatherland Front Committee of Hai Phong for organizing the cordial meeting, so that the party could get close to the people and so that the people could express their opinions and discuss matters. He also praised the industrialists for having boldly presented their problems and criticized the state organs frankly and openly. He said:

"I want to affirm, first of all, the viewpoint of the central and municipal echelons, which recognizes the permanency and equality of the five economic components. It is necessary to enable that thought to be fully understood in the party and among all strata of the people, and to gradually eliminate the attitude of being 'afraid of being fattened up to be slaughtered.' Not to understand that policy is to act contrary to the party line. If that thought can be overcome, such specific problems as sources of capital and attracting investment by foreigners and overseas Vietnamese can be resolved.

"Secondly, it is necessary to allow the five economic components to compete with one another. If private individuals can do the job well, let them do it, and if state enterprises do not do a good job they should not do it. Socialism must give us productivity, good quality, and efficiency, not production at any cost. Effectiveness is the only yardstick, not the terms 'state operated' or 'privately operated.' If that is to be accomplished, there must be competition. Whoever does a better job and is more efficient continues to exist and develop. State enterprises which do not do a good job will be demoted to a cooperative status or dissolved. While waiting for the state to issue guidance documents, the municipality is taking the initiative in the trial contracting out of two local enterprises in order to increase production. The municipality will also study the resolution of such specific requirements as granting the private enterprises temporary permission to operate, discuss the matter of the industrial-commercial bank lending capital to private individuals for production, etc.

"Finally, the development of the individual economy cannot be separated from state management. The state only allows wholesome competition which develops human talent, and does not permit competition by trickery, tax evasion, the production of counterfeit goods, or violations of laws."

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SOCIAL

Measures for Encouraging Family Planning Proposed

42090227 Hanoi PHAP LUAT THUONG THUC in Vietnamese 10 Jun 88 pp 3, 5

[Italicized passages as published]

[Text] This is one of the hundreds of stories that take place every day. Young Vu Dinh Thai is a soldier on tour in An Giang Province, very far from his home in Phuc

Tho District, Hanoi, where his wife and children live. In November 1987, his wife delivered a second child, within 5 years of the birth of the first one. The people's committee in his village, Phung Thuong, levied a fine of 200 kg of rice, while his 3-member family has received 156 kg of rice from the cooperative since December. This is not counting the fine of the village clinic. If his wife and two children fast for 6 months and turn over this entire allocation for the fines, they will still owe 44 kg! Thai appealed to the people's committee and authoritative agencies in Phuc Tho District to reexamine and resolve this problem. (See the 12 May 1988 issue of NHAN DAN, p 3.)

The problem of how to implement family planning is an explosive and throbbing issue of life in the society of today. To solve the problem of the population explosion in an economically poor and technologically backward country like ours, it is extremely hard to figure out how to slow the population growth from its previous rate of over 3 percent and present rate of over 2 percent about 1.7 percent more within the next few years. For a long time now our only method has been very severe penalties—for farmers, fines of thousands of dong in the old currency or many quintals of paddy, and for workers and government employees, loss of jobs or cuts in entitlements (while there are many other penalty systems, many "fees" slip with the rate of devaluation out on the market). Warnings are effective to some extent, but they are not certain to get results. Stiff and widespread penalties have been in effect for many years now, yet the birth rate is still high, and its annual reduction too small.

About such penalties, it must be said that *they involve many legal errors.*

Let us examine the case above in detail.

1. There is no state or government regulation that administrative fines in money or rice must be levied for having a second child within 5 years after the first, nor has any agency been given the power to levy such penalties. *The village (or district or province) people's committee has no power to establish and implement such forms of punishment on its own.*

2. Since 200 kg of paddy are equivalent at current prices to 60,000 dong, heavy fines in rice, which is food, or in money or other possessions, or by worker layoffs, *strike the source of life for the mother and the two children*, contrary to the regulation on the protection, care, and education of children (article 5), which states: "Children have the right to care and nourishment. The family, the state, and society must cooperate in caring for them and in striving to make it possible for that care and nourishment to be more and more intensive...."

3. What if the decision of the people's committee is not complied with or cannot be complied with?—there is a good possibility of this occurring. *Use force*, as we

frequently see done, by confiscating goods, taking furniture from the home, etc.? Or imprisonment? This is not permitted by law! And if it is ignored, the decision is legally ineffective.

4. In Thai's particular case, there is also the problem that the *rear service program* applies for him. Article 10 of the military obligation law states that state agencies and mass organizations of the people..., "are responsible," in their functional areas, "for mobilizing, educating, and arranging for and enabling citizens to meet their military obligations."

So what is the right viewpoint on the issue of responsibility for family planning?

1. First of all, persons who do not practice family planning—father and mother alike—cause difficulties for themselves in daily life, work, leisure, studies, recreation, etc., punishing themselves. This is bearing responsibility and parental responsibility toward children. If parents meet with such difficulties as those listed above because of having too many children, they do not have the right to request that the state and society resolve those difficulties for them—the state and society will only help them according to capability and will not give them any priority.

2. Because they do not practice family planning, both mother and father can be criticized by their mass organizations and other organizations, will not be designated advanced workers, emulation warriors, or new culture families, will not be elected to administrative agencies and management agencies of mass organizations and other organizations (including such positions as head of a state-operated enterprise or college). They will not be elected representatives to people's committees, representatives to the National Congress, etc. They will not receive honors reserved for progressive citizens, nor the accompanying material and nonmaterial advantages associated with those honors.

3. The responsibility of state agencies and social organizations regarding the issue of family planning is usually forgotten or minimized. This is the most important aspect and resource! When there is no planning or planning is violated and a child is born outside the social plan, no matter how much of a penalty is imposed, the event has happened and cannot be erased. The general birth rate can be increased by that contribution.

So, what is most important is to ensure family planning and prevent violations of planning. There must be psychological measures and technical measures. Information, propaganda, and especially mass communication agencies must constantly analyze and verify advantages and disadvantages in this matter, and hold up good examples for emulation and criticize failure through books, films, and other artistic activities. Agencies, enterprises, mass organizations, cooperatives, other social organizations, and labor collectives on the basic

level must include a family planning section in their plans, include in their program of activities reviews, praise, and criticism of specific instances and decisions to properly compel compliance, this is certain to have a very useful psychological effect on the organization. Good results are certain if, parallel with the above measures, agencies for protecting mothers and children, pharmaceutical stores, and health installations supply and sell technical materials (birth control pills, contraceptive devices, etc.) to anyone needing them.

This is not only a moral responsibility, but also a legal one, a matter of carrying the *system of responsibilities* for functional agencies, organizations, and individuals.

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Returnee Describes Economic Stagnation in Phuong Son Village

42090256a Hanoi DAI DOAN KET in Vietnamese
21 May 88 p 5

[Article by Phuong Ha in the column "Readers' Page": "Through These Days of Hunger, the Hope of My Village's People"]

[Text] Pressing 10 toes on the 9-kilometer road of red soil from the ancient city of Quang Tri, made slippery and gooey from the drizzle, I returned to the village after 3 years away at sea, still hoping somehow in the joy of the reunion to see the villagers with ample food. But during the first day at the village at the base of a pile of light green rice I met children picking up scattered potatoes in 13-14 degree cold while dressed lightly in tattered shirts with dirty short pants. Holding the hands of and visiting with my aunts, I looked sadly at the faces of everyone pale in the cold coupled with the yellow of hunger.

One of my aunts (mother's side) said, "I had to borrow paddy before Tet. You borrow one basket (13 kilograms) and pay back one and a half at harvest time. This is me borrowing from houses I know in the village; the interest is light. It's not for others who have to pay back 1.8 baskets for one."

"I heard my relatives were distributed extra land to grow sweet potatoes," I asked timidly.

My aunt seemed to understand me immediately:

"You know your village's land. Besides the ricefield, all else is sandy soil. It's good for growing poplar (beefwood), not potatoes. Very few tubers and there must be a lot of stable manure. My house sliced up more than a quintal of potatoes; dryness got most of it."

My aunt (father's side), who is 75 years old this year, hunchbacked and must bend over to work out in the garden, added, "Two-thirds of the village is hungry or short at least 2 months of food. Before when there was

rice and potato famine we found crabs and fish out in the ricefields to cook in a banana gruel for subsistence. Now chemicals and insecticide are sprayed which kills off all the crabs and fish, even leeches. Villagers still have ways to borrow, borrowing all over the village, district and province and paying back whatever the interest is."

Gloomily, I made the circle visiting relatives on the drizzly afternoon with the cold wind battering the tips of the bamboo. Dinner at some homes is a small bamboo basket of boiled vegetables dipped in salt water or a tiny bit of salted fish, boiled and diluted, at others. Every home has half a bowl of unripe sweet potatoes or wilted potatoes clinging to a few grains of rice.

Tossing and turning that evening on a bamboo hammock my mother had slept in until it got too stiff, I continued to reason why my village is hungry. Several fireflies, no doubt numb from the cold, flew into the house off and on looking for a little more warmth, making me recall my childhood more than 30 years ago and similar pitch black nights when I shivered waiting for my mother to return in order to have a tiny bit of rice to cook. Ordinarily after a day of working for hire, my mother would bring home several jars or rice in a conical leaf-plaited hat. Counting only the period of hostilities and figuring only the 13 years of liberation to date, why are villagers who were my age then still living in such misery? But why hungry?

Phuong Son, my village, is just like many other villages on the row of "First Letter" villages extending from above Cua Tung down to Phong Dien District of old Thua Thien Province, the area liberated and very fiercely contested throughout two wars of resistance. In 1975, the villagers returned from evacuation sites in Vinh Linh to a village overgrown with weeds and full of bombs and mines. They had to disarm mines, detonate bombs, cut grass, and chop down bamboo to make their way. The only remaining means of production were fields of cover grass after lying fallow for years. Aside from leaky houses, families had nothing of their own.

The establishment of agricultural cooperatives in such a situation was quite easy. Once they had become acquainted with the collective way of making a living—the pot of rice only half full for several years—they had to combine the three cooperatives of the three villages into one large one. An extremely large one, with control impossible.

Operating in accordance with Directive No 100 on product contracts, everyone felt life would move up relatively fast. But that contract method has also exposed irrational things, especially contract norms which have grown more and more unstable, causing the portion on exceeding contract norms which the cooperative members enjoy to continue to gradually decline. The product portion the cooperative gets after subtracting expenses and divides up among the cooperative members according to days worked is also not much. Meanwhile, the debts my village's people have to pay have grown more

and more extensive: the cooperative has 180 main laborers but has to take care of 21 male and female cadres from unit deputies to the director (indirect work points), using up nearly 10 tons of paddy one year; each main laborer has to give 30 obligatory work days a year and, if not, has to pay 1.5 kilograms of paddy per day (higher than the value of his work days); then there are funds for the general good, contingencies, national defense or contributions to build the conference hall, nursery, medical aid station, etc. There is one very strange item which the people have to pay. Each time there is a conference or it is about time for Tet, the district's organizations will sometimes come down to request or to buy at an extremely cheap price several quintals of glutinous rice and 50 to 70 catties of pork. The cooperative management board knows their cooperative members are upset but cannot say no because they are the leadership organizations, the departments and sectors controlling things from water conservancy to seeds, fertilizer, ashes, plows, etc. And the tractor which has come to do the soil work for my village in recent years has not had to run by means of chickens or glutinous rice but by pigs. Pigs have had to be around a quintal in size, just right for the person to carry, just right for the district's station chief or deputy, several each season.

My paternal aunt's husband Luy, one of the village's most experienced farmers, has worked the fields since he was 5 years old. Now he's 70 and still does plowing. He provided further explanation about the hunger situation.

"Not talking too far back, before 1980, the extreme of farming in the First Letter area was having to pedal a water wheel. In our village the field is on high ground. During the fruit season (summer-fall) you had to pedal a water wheel all night and throughout the morning. Whenever there was a successful harvest, our village's two-crop field got just half the amount of paddy for a single crop. Then, my house and many others got at least 30 luong (approximately 2 tons). Now the Nam Thach Han water conservancy flows uniformly to each clump of rice and yields are at least twice that of before, yet my house, with six mouths to feed and skilled at work, only gets a ton. In our village the population has not increased at all because half has gone South. The paddy produced is quite a lot but pays for too many accounts, so it turns out my family doesn't get 30 to 40 percent. This of course does not take into account years with serious natural disasters and total crop failures."

What my uncle said is something I have often wrestled with. I asked for further clarification.

"As you see it, your farmers should earn approximately what percentage of the products they turn out to be acceptable?"

"At least 60 to 70 percent. And the only way to get that figure is to contract systematically like in a number of places I have heard about on the radio. I hope in the coming summer-fall season we do away with distribution

according to work points, cut back cadres, and contract systematically. Our village's people also want to know very badly how much they must pay in taxes, water conservancy fees, and public and social works during the coming season. Don't force the people to contribute on and on. With everything heaped on their heads as it is now, they will stay hungry longer and longer."

My Uncle Luy's aspiration to take real control of the plot of ricefield given to him is also the aspiration of the people of the tiny village of Phuong Son. But if the people of the village hang on to only 50 hectares of ricefield they will be lucky to have enough to eat. Behind the village is a broad sandbank with only a little vegetation which his father cultivated in the past for windbreak to keep the sand out of the village. It still is not cultivated or grows only a little sweet potato with low yields. For the village to get moderately better off and the First Letter belt to extend the entire eastern length of Trieu Hai District and become prosperous, this sandy land has to be improved, first of all by growing beefwood. The failure because all types want to collectivize is principally the lesson for dividing up the land for each family to cultivate, tend, and protect on its own to get beefwood. Trieu Van Village is a coastal village not far from my village. Thanks to dividing up the sandy land for the people to grow beefwood, the people have had a stable life for the past several years, vivid evidence of knowing how to make a living. Regrettably, this model has not been recognized by Trieu Hai nor studied by my village's leadership.

My village remains hungry because it does not know how to make a living.

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Journalist Questions Existence of Food Shortage, Famine
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[Text] In the latter part of May and the first part of June, the international press reported the existence of very serious famine affecting 3 to 8 million people living in the provinces of Ha Nam Ninh, Thanh Hoa, Nghe Tinh and Binh Tri Thien.

As soon as international public opinion was mobilized Vietnam stopped providing information and started talking about a food shortage instead of famine.

In Hanoi, everyone has observed that there have been as many beggars around as now. The authorities have even been forced to bring in trucks to send these people back to their provinces of origin. There has been talk about deaths but there has been no documentation on this.

It became necessary to wait until 3 July to realize the full extent of the famine. In this connection, the youth journal TUOI TRE published a survey conducted by a

certain Phung Thanh Van. In April 1988, the latter visited the village of Quang Duc, located in Quang Xuong district (Thanh Hoa Province). Guided by the local commune chief, he visited a family. The spectacle that awaited him was unimaginable. The bamboo house was scarcely standing up. Inside, there was only one bed but without a blanket. Outside, the few sweet potatoes that had not yet been eaten were as big around as a finger. The girl of the house confessed, "My family hasn't eaten rice for a long time now. My father, Le Van Huyen who is 56 years old, took my 5-year old sister away. It's been 4 days since they left and I still haven't heard from them. Last month, in fact, my mother tried to sell her to a family of a neighboring commune but my sister found her way. My mother, Nguyen Thi Khuong, also departed with my 3-year old brother and some time ago she traded in my 10-month old brother for 10,000 piastres (40 francs on the market [words missing from original text]). They succeeded in giving me 1.5 kilograms of rice but I made a soup out of it and now there is nothing left. Beginning tomorrow I will be obliged to eat sweet potatoes. At night I cover myself with a mat. I have only two pieces of light clothing one of which is completely torn. In 1977, we planted 5 sao of paddy but after the harvest we had to pay taxes and debts and so we had nothing left."

The journalist then visited the Tuoi family. Her 42-year old husband had left 2 weeks ago with their 7-year old son. She lives all alone with her 76-year old mother-in-law and two children, one 4 years old and the other 6 months old. They have only vegetables as food. The journalist saw a naked child lying on the bed and then asked the mother, "Why do you leave your 6-month old child lying on the bed like a worm?" Tuoi answered, "That one? That's my 4-year old son." He then approached the child and noticed that it had a vacant look. As for the 10-month old baby it did not show any feelings whatsoever. He had become apathetic. The commune chief assured him, nevertheless, that there were even more unfortunate persons around.

The teacher training school has been forced to close down. Courses are no longer being given except for the 400 third year students. At each meal these students are allowed only 25 grams of rice. For months now their only main dish has been salt. Nhan, 58 years of age, who has been a teacher for 18 years, eats only 10 grams of rice per meal, and so forth. The journalist met only people who were leaving their villages to go to the cities to beg. All such groups of people he saw on the road gave him the same explanation: the harvest was bad, taxes were too high and too numerous. Some weaved mats for the government's use but the latter never provided the paddy that it owed in exchange. They did all they could to survive but they are presently cornered.

A woman who runs a tea shop at 138 B Quang Trung Street cried out when she saw the journalist, "Why don't you put poison in the faucet water to kill us all. That would be better."

Phung Thanh Van then went into a school and talked with the teacher. A survey of the standard of living of the students indicated that seven of them ate only a bowl of soup and a bowl of vegetable leaves a day, 18 had two bowls of soup a day, seven had one bowl of rice and one bowl of soup a day and seven had two bowls of rice a day.

Finally, workers at a factory related that in March they had confided their money to a worker there so he could go and look for rice in the south but there has been no news on him since he left.

These few cases are only examples but they do illustrate the seriousness of the famine.

Prior to 1973, South Vietnam exported rice. Since 1975, its number one concern has been to reach a point of self-sufficiency. The north has been able to subsist thanks to Chinese and Soviet assistance. Since 1975 self-sufficiency is also its major problem.

A Vietnamese proverb says, "The Vietnamese do not die of hunger but they are hungry until the time of their death." Nevertheless, with this food shortage another stage has been reached that has no other name than famine.

A Contested System

To explain this famine natural causes may be cited. However, it is also admitted that the Vietnamese production level is too small compared to the demographic increase rate while civil servants make up a completely unproductive group not to mention the soldiers who must be fed because of the war. Above all, Vietnam made a mistake in its economic options. The peasants are bound hand and foot: "the tax system only impoverishes the people," "nobody wants to produce anymore." These thoughts are only everyone's lips.

Nguyen Khac Vien, nevertheless, considered abroad as orthodox for the past 30 years, recently found words to protest against the present system in the labor union newspaper (LAO DONG). He wrote, "Everybody is looking for rice, families, offices, districts. If they produce more rice farmers are faced with all sorts of problems especially from a cohort of parasites who are above them, namely the group chief, the deputy chief, the cooperative director, the management committee, the accountant, the commune people's committee, the district people's committee, the city people's committee, etc. All live on two individuals who cultivate a miserable piece of land. Not to mention that they have to give gifts in the form of tobacco, chickens, etc. If one makes

sacrifices to raise a pig how many permits must one obtain to be able to sell it or eat it? Similarly, farmers are forced to sell their produce to the state but they must buy fertilizer and insecticides on the black market."

To come back to the problem of famine in Thanh Hoa, everyone says that this came about as a result of a lie. Indeed, on 15 November 1987, the journal NONG NGHIEP VIETNAM (Vietnamese Agriculture) carried a front-page headline that read "Good Harvest in Thanh Hoa." The article explained that the province that had for a long time lacked rice had reached a point of self-sufficiency. This had to do with hiding the truth in order to please authorities.

What is serious is that this attitude does not concern only the specific problem of famine in Thanh Hoa; it evidently affects other provinces since famine is striking at 8 million people. Vietnamese officials cannot get rid of the habit of always hiding the truth. When publicity about this famine became too widespread they talked about a food shortage in order to save face and avoid an exploitation of the situation.

This unprecedented famine-food shortage resulted in the resignation of Vo Van Kiet from his position as interim council chairman. In his speech before the assembly Vo Van Kiet stated, "The responsibility for this situation lies with the council of ministers and its cornerstone the permanent council. The decision came from the political bureau but I committed the error of not being able to convince it and not having brought forth the necessary proofs at the time of the meeting on 4 February 1988."

This declaration reflects the present situation. Responsibility does not fall on one single individual. Nevertheless, the Vo Van Kiet faction—that is in favor of truth and change—in the bureau is in the minority. Struggles for power between factions continue as before.

Prior to 1975, the standard of living in South Vietnam was comparable to that of Thailand. While Thailand is in the process of becoming a new industrialized country, Vietnamese who happen to be going through Bangkok do not hesitate recognizing that it would take at least 50 years for Vietnam to catch up with its neighbor. But if a decision is not made to call a spade a spade then it is to be feared that it would take 100 years and not 50 years. As long as time is devoted to a struggle for power and not to the country's development and as long as a policy of change and opening does not predominate the Vietnamese situation will remain without remedy.

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